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GUITAR WORLD

5 SONGS!

DEEP PURPLE
"Smoke on the Water"

THE SEX PISTOLS
"God Save the Queen"

MARILYN MANSON
"Sweet Dreams"

GREEN DAY
"Brain Stew/Jaded"

JIMI HENDRIX
"Purple Haze"

AUGUST 1996

SEX Pistols

the second coming

THE STORY OF THE CLASH
by Jon Savage

GREEN DAY

BUZZCOCKS

NO DOUBT

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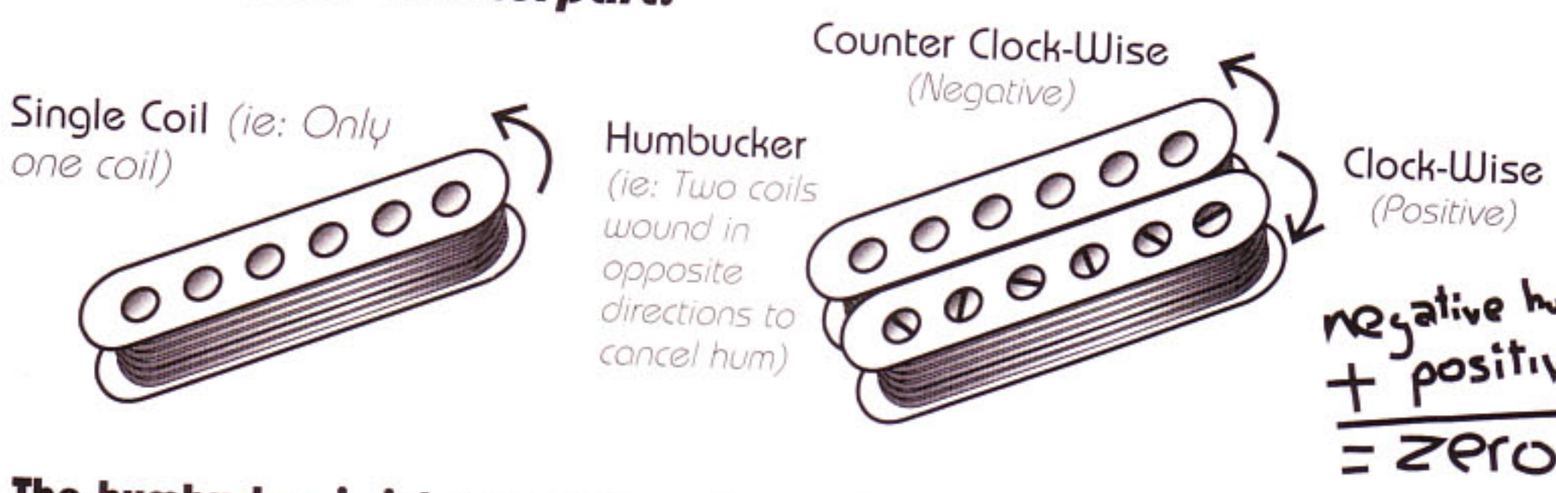
Cover photo by Mitch Tobias
This page: Mitch Tobias
Penny Smith, Jay Blakesberg, Guitar: Mitch Tobias

Ask Dr. Epiphone

Q: I'm currently looking for a solid-body electric guitar. Can you tell me what to look for with regards to pickups?

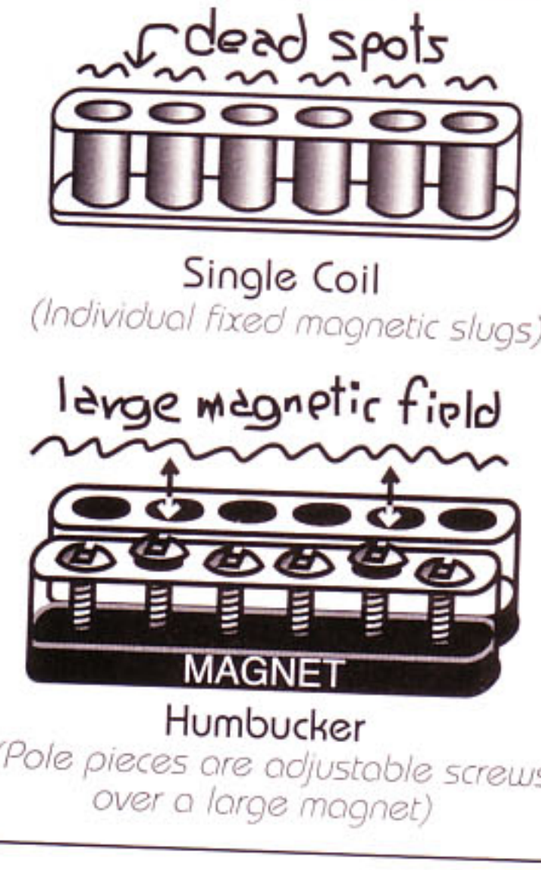
A: *Sure. Basically, there are two types of pickups currently used on most solid-body electric guitars today. There is the single-coil pickup and the humbucking pickup. Of the two, the humbucker offers some very distinct advantages over it's older counterpart.*



negative hum
+ positive hum
= zero hum

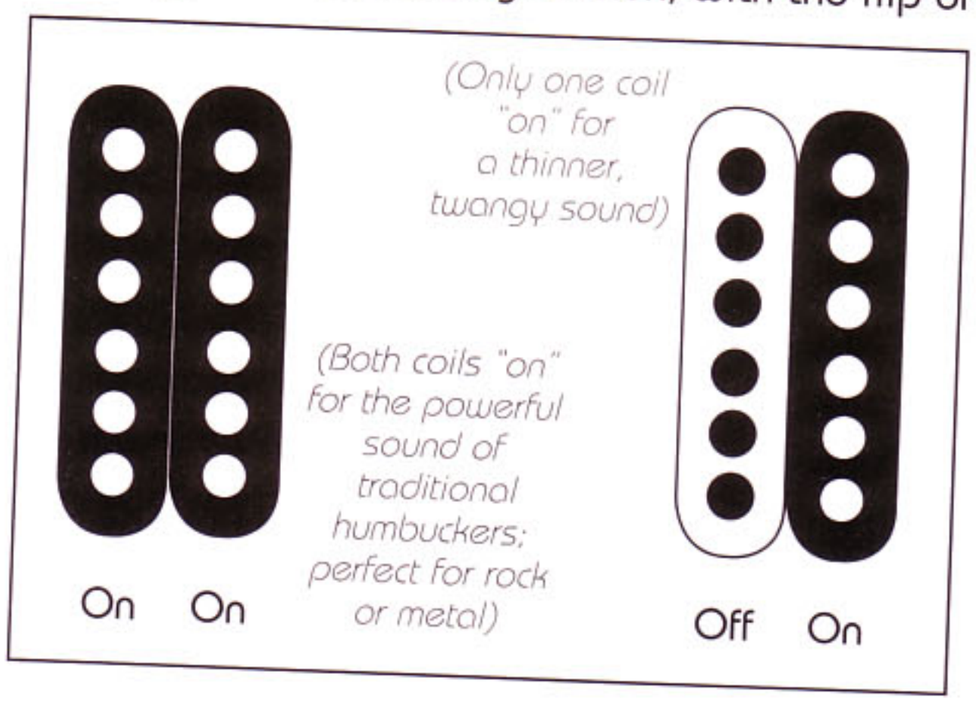
1: The humbucker is inherently "hum" or noise free. *(Hence the name humbucking, meaning to "buck" or avoid hum).* Unlike the older design of the single-coil pickup which uses only one coil, the humbucker uses two coils wound with copper wire in opposite directions or connected in reverse polarity. By winding or connecting in *opposite* polarity and connecting together, side by side, the hum or noise from each individual coil is canceled by the other.

2: Most humbuckers offer individual, adjustable pole pieces. Unlike single coils which use fixed magnetic poles or "slugs", humbucker pole pieces can be *individually* adjusted to match the height and response of each individual string. Raise the pole piece closer to the string and the string is louder. Lower the pole piece and the string is softer. Afterall, not all guitars or strings respond the same.



3: The humbucker has a significantly hotter output level. While most single-coil pickups use six small and relatively weak pole piece magnets, the humbucker uses one or more large ceramic or alnico magnets spanning across the width of the base. This, combined with two coils, creates a much larger magnetic field which tends to eliminate "dead-spots" while increasing the overall "power" of the pickup. That's why humbucker equipped guitars such as the Les Paul™ are typically the choice of rock and heavy metal guitarists.

4: The humbucker gives you two sounds in one! The single-coil pickup can only give you one sound - a single coil sound. However, by wiring the humbucker in such a way as to allow for "coil-tapping", you can turn on just one coil of a humbucker and get the thin, "twangy" sound of a single. Then, with the flip of a switch, you can turn back on both coils and get the fat, powerful sound of both coils. Guitars like the Gibson Jimmy Page Les Paul™, the Epiphone Nighthawk™, Del Rey™ and Coronet™ offer this as a standard feature. However, most *humbucker* equipped guitars can be modified to add this powerful feature.



For these reasons I'd highly recommend going with a humbucker equipped electric guitar.

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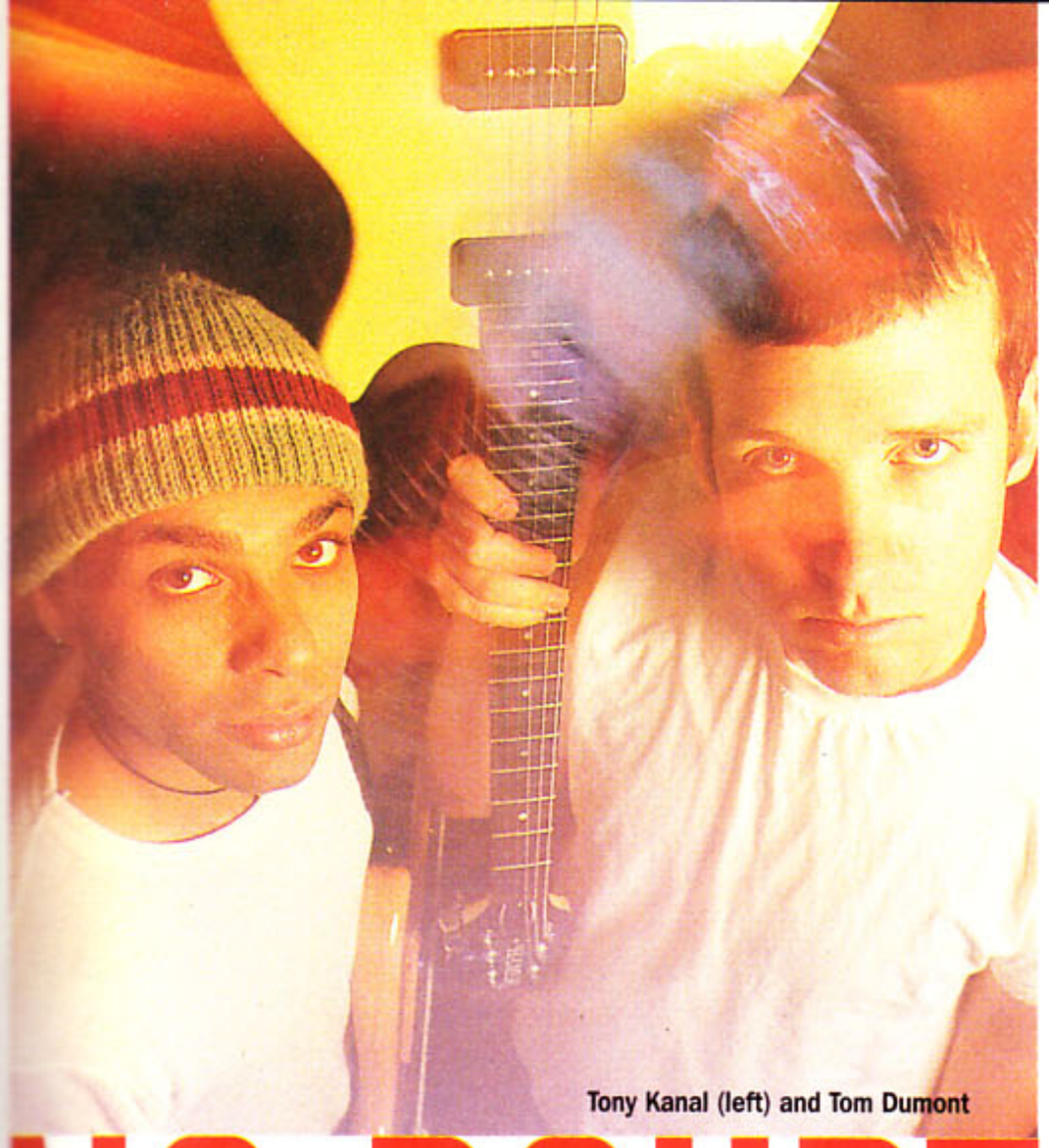


Tony Kanal (left) and Tom Dumont

NO DOUBT

Doubting Thomas

LIKE MANY GUITARISTS who first answered the call in the early Eighties, No Doubt's Tom Dumont, 28, was initially drawn to the musician's life by the made-for-adolescence battle cry of heavy metal.

"Ever since I got my first Kiss record, I wanted to be a guy in a rock band," Dumont recalls. "But the heavy metal scene was *so* terrible in Orange County, California. It was really competitive, and the music wasn't what was important. Joining No Doubt, a ska band, was a big change, but it was immediately way more fun—the music was a whole new world to me."

On *Tragic Kingdom* (Trauma/Interscope), No Doubt's third album, ska is but one world in a vast musical universe. Punk, reggae, new wave, country, pop, blues and disco (with, of course, a few flakes of metal) are all explored with equal vigor and aplomb.

According to Dumont, his knack for style-surfing belies a less-than-diligent practice ethic. "I'm a very lazy player as far as that stuff goes—I'll kind of listen to stuff and think about it, but I'll never take the time to figure it out," says the guitarist. "I mean, I played the flamenco-style solo on 'Don't Speak' with a pick, which just completely ignores the number one rule of that style of guitar playing!"

With the recent departure of No Doubt founding keyboardist/songwriter Eric Stefani (brother of the band's vocalist, Gwen), Dumont has stepped up to assume a bigger share of the songwriting chores. In fact, he penned the music to "Just a Girl," *Tragic Kingdom*'s decidedly Eighties-flavored breakthrough single. "I consciously wanted to make a weird, jerky riff that sounded Devo- or B-52's-like," he says. "That single surprised the hell out of me. I mean, I always thought the song was cool, but I never expected it to fly like it has."

—TIM KENNEALLY

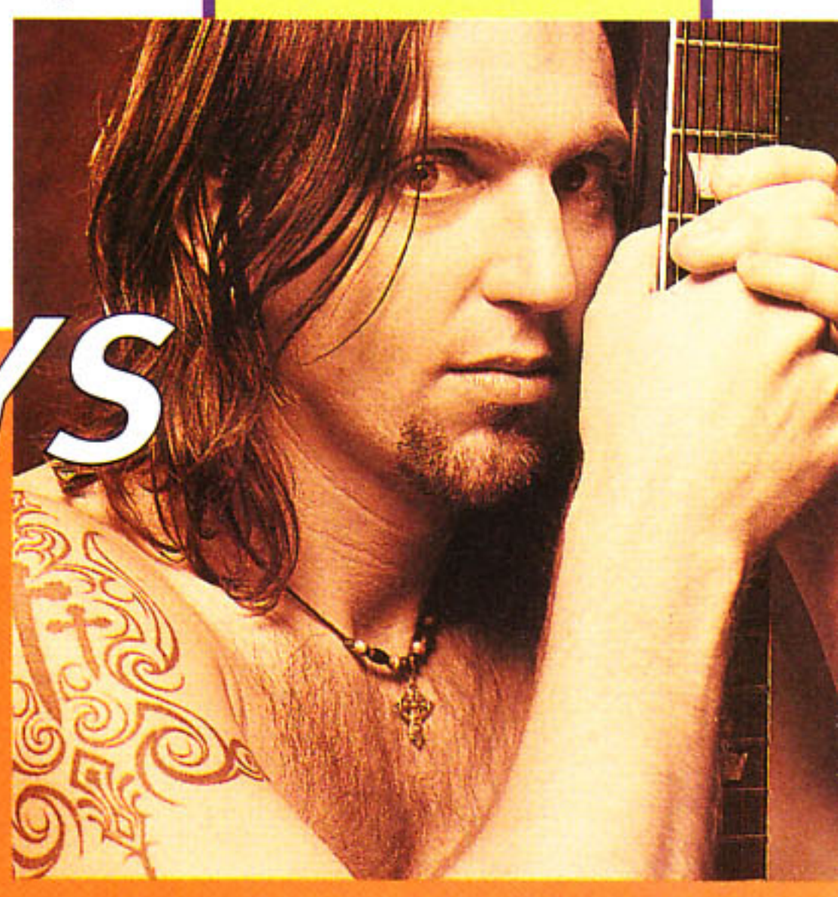
WHAMMY BAR

news & notes

IT'S A CONFUSING, often frustrating phenomenon that musicologists and sociologists will likely ponder for decades to come: for whatever reason, an appalling number of the most visible British guitarists of the Seventies were named named Mick. We get 'em confused all the time, and figure you must, too. So here is a handy guide to the Micks. Pay attention.

MICK ABRAHAMS (original Jethro Tull guitarist); **MICK BOX** (Uriah Heep); **MICK JONES** (Foreigner), **MICK JONES** (The Clash, Bid Audio Dynamite, B.A.D.2); **MICK MOODY** (original Whitesnake guitarist); **MICK RALPHS** (Mott the Hoople, Bad Company); **MICK RONSON** (David Bowie, Ian Hunter Band; now deceased); **MICK SLATTERY** (Hawkwind); **MICK TAYLOR** (Rolling Stones lead guitarist from 1969 to 1974).

THE BLACK CROWES are putting the finishing touches on their fourth studio album, tentatively titled *Three Snakes and One Charm.* The album was produced



THE CABLE GUYS

America tunes into Dishwalla.

"WE'RE TRYING TO bring a higher groove quotient to our music than most rock bands do, and still not sound like the Chili Peppers," says Dishwalla guitarist Rodney Browning. "We're not into white-boy funk rock."

Though no one would ever mistake them for Funkadelic, the band does blend some funk and soul with a heavy, classic-rock guitar crunch on its debut album, *Pet Your Friends* (A&M). "Each member of the band is into radically different music, and we all share the songwriting," Browning explains. "Our album is the only thing we could sound like. We had some really interesting fights while we were recording it, but they were well worth it. We can all listen to each song and say, 'Part of me is in this.' "

Because of the band members' varied tastes and influences, Dishwalla logged countless hours rehearsing and shaping their sound before they started playing out. "We hid in our garage for two years," Browning recalls. "It took a while before the songs started making sense."

One of those garage-crafted tunes, "Counting Blue Cars," is making sense to more and more people every day, as MTV and radio crank it into heavy rotation. "We were touring in Europe when 'Counting Blue Cars' started to hit," Browning says. "We had no idea what we were coming home to. All of a sudden, people at shows knew the words to our songs."

A word most of their fans probably don't know, however, is "Dishwalla."

"Dishwalla is a Navy Seal code word for pancakes," the guitarist jokes. "Actually, we got the name out of a *Wired* magazine article. Dishwallas are nomads in India who are buying satellite dishes and selling cable TV to their neighbors living in huts. They live in extreme poverty, yet they've got one of the best entertainment systems in the world. They get 90 channels. All of a sudden these people are getting introduced to *Beavis and Butt-head.*"

—JEFF COLCHAMIRO

Zakk wyLde

FIRST THERE WAS Zakk Wylde, Ozzy Osbourne's heavy metal whiz kid. Then there was Zakk Wylde, rebel boy, leading his Southern-rock power trio, Pride & Glory, into battle. Now, on *Book of Shadows* (Geffen), the guitarist's first solo album, there's Zakk Wylde, sensitive singer-songwriter. Some of Zakk's fans—and detractors—may find his new, unplugged persona hard to swallow. But the man who once lit up the world's arenas at Ozzy's side insists there's no reason reason to be surprised.

"I've always written lighter songs," says Wylde. "There were lots of acoustic-based songs on the Pride & Glory album, too, but they were sandwiched between real rockers." *Book of Shadows*, he says, is striking because its laid-back fare is not overshadowed by tunes reflecting his penchant for electric guitar-driven groups like the Allman Brothers Band and Lynyrd Skynyrd. On the new album, Wylde goes whole-hog acoustic, even tooting a little Neil Young-ish harmonica and singing his own sweet-voiced Crosby, Stills and Nash-style harmonies.

"What I like about this album is that you can pretty much put it on and kick back," says Wylde. "But I don't consider most of the songs here to be mellow," he quickly adds. "Even though it's acoustic, to me this stuff is heavy. Just listen to the guitar solos—this is not some fluffy shit!" He also points out that the dark, gothic ballads on the album, such as "1,000,000 Miles Away," are reminiscent of his work with Ozzy.

Meanwhile, Wylde's musical relationship with the godfather of heavy metal appears to be over. After recording *Ozzmosis* (Epic, 1995) with Osbourne last year, Wylde spent several months "jamming" with Guns N' Roses, apparently with an eye towards becoming that band's new second guitarist. That situation was still up in the air when Ozzy gave Zakk an ultimatum.

"I was really confused," Zakk admits. "Everything came down at once. Ozzy called me on a Friday and said, 'I need an answer now, Zakk: Are you going to tour with me or not?' I told him that I needed until Monday or Tuesday; he said he couldn't wait any longer. Then the Guns thing didn't work out, so I went into the studio and did my own thing.

"And you know what? Whatever happens, it feels good having a record come out with my name on it. These are my tunes, and my vision."

—ALAN PAUL

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—ALAN PAUL

AUGUST 1996

Richard Bacchus (left) and Danny Sage

D GENERATION

Rock Candy

"WE WERE DROPPED literally the day our record came out." Guitarist Richard Bacchus's memory of D Generation's crash-and-burn experience with EMI records in 1994 still rankles. Brightening, Bacchus adds, "That was back when grunge was at its height, and the label just didn't know what to do with us. In today's musical climate, our music makes a lot more sense."

As if to prove Bacchus's point, D Generation has just released *No Lunch* (Columbia), produced by Ric Ocasek (Bad Religion, Weezer), an album so full of East Village snarl and heady hooks that it's guaranteed to put a swagger in your step.

Danny Sage, who shares songwriting and guitar chores with Bacchus, calls D Generation "a power-punk band," but then goes on to rattle off a list of power-*pop* influences like the Beatles and Cheap Trick. "Hey, at heart, most of the great punk bands, like the Ramones, were really good pop bands with great hooks," he says. "The mark of good pop is that you hear it once or twice and you can sing the song. That's what made me love the Beatles when I was a little kid. But writing pop is easy for us, so we go for a dirty sound and do pop hooks in a nasty way."

Bacchus and Sage both think that the world is now ready for D Generation. "Lately, there have been a hundred Better Than Ezra's around," says Sage. "People have to be ready for something else. Sure, some of them won't like how brash and in-your-face we are, but they won't be able to deny that what we do is the real thing. We mean it, put our blood, sweat and tears into it and have great songs. I really don't know what else rock and roll is supposed to be about."

—DAVID GRAD

WHAMMY BAR

by **JACK JOSEPH PUIG**

and the band, the same team behind the Crowes' 1994 release, *Amorica* . . . **AEROSMITH** are also nearing completion of a new studio album, produced by **GLEN BALLARD**. Ballard, who lent his Midas touch to the group's previous two chart-toppers, also worked on **ALANIS MORISSETTE'S** current mega-blockbuster, *Jagged Little Pill*.

After wading through thousands of audition tapes submitted from all over the world, **JUDAS PRIEST** has found a new lead screamer, 28-year-old American vocalist **"RIPPER" OWENS**. Original priest vocalist **ROB HALFORD** also has a new solo project on the launch pad, and has high hopes of attaining mainstream success with it. "I love the accessible sounds that I hear on the radio today, and I know what my fans want from me," Halford says. "But I think that it's also important for me to reach a wider audience. Radio will love what my new band is doing, and so will music buyers across the world."

Ex-**MINUTEMEN** and **FIREHOSE** bassist **MIKE WATT**, clad in a mouse costume, recently debuted his rough-and tumble **MADONNA** tribute band the

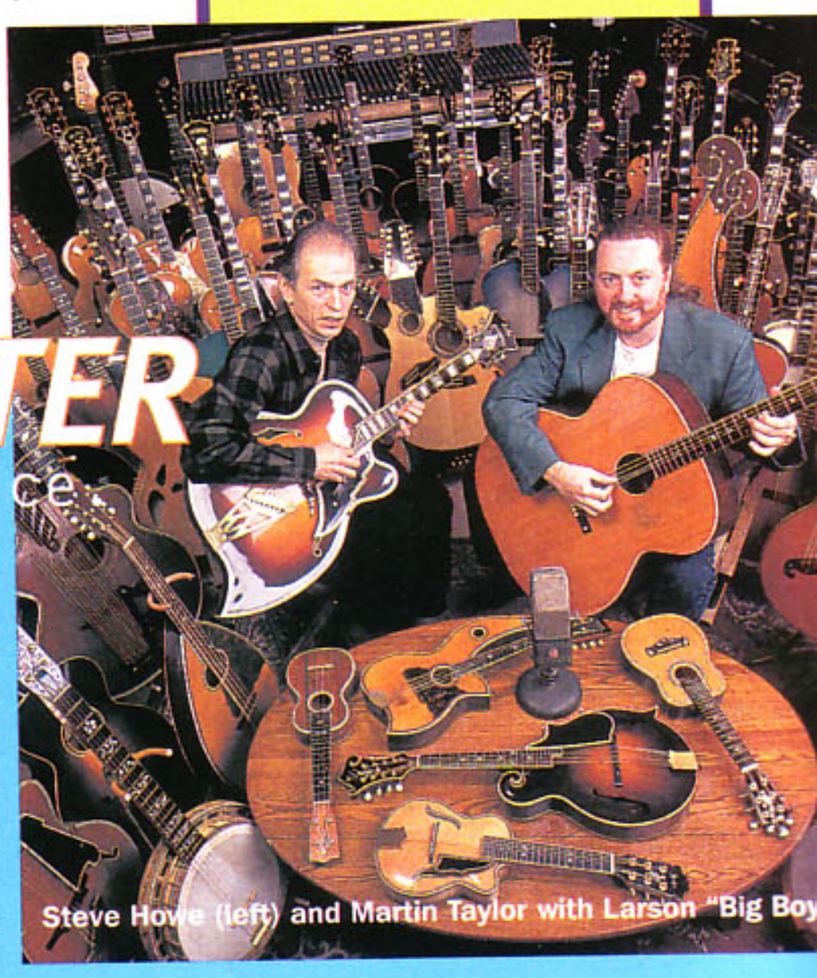
MASTERPIECE THEATER

Steve Howe is the collector's choice

YES GUITARIST STEVE Howe, who owns more than one hundred rare and custom-made guitars, loves the sound, look and smell of vintage instruments. Small wonder, then, that he recently jumped at the opportunity to leave his collection at home and record an album using guitars belonging to Scott Chinery, a renowned collector who owns more than six-hundred awe-inspiring beauties of every size and make. Chinery enlisted Howe and British jazz guitarist Martin Taylor to showcase some of the finest pieces in his collection on the album *Masterpiece Guitars*.

"Scott's guitars are all exciting," says Howe, who is also producing the album. "We experienced the difficulty of looking at 10 incredibly pristine D'Angelicos and deciding which one to play. My main goal was to present the natural sound of each instrument. Of course, one of the things that makes a guitar sound good is a great guitarist, which is why it was such a pleasure to work with Martin. His command of numerous musical styles exceeds that of most guitarists I've ever seen."

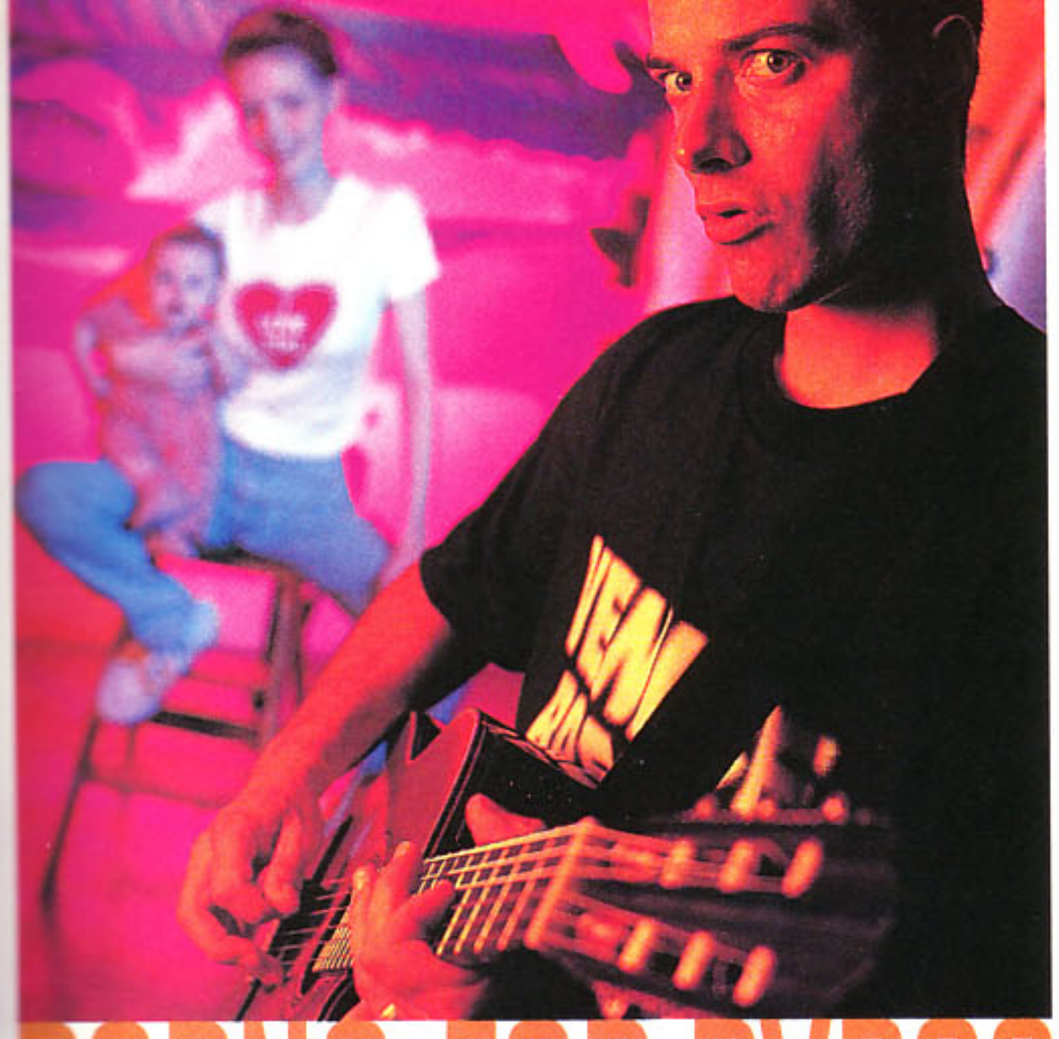
Among the guitars selected by Howe and Taylor for the project were a 1930's Gibson L-5 (a classic archtop); a Selmer Modéle Jazz similar to the guitar played by Django Reinhardt; various Dyer harp guitars; a rare D'Acquisto classical guitar; and a huge Larson "Big Boy" flat-top. The most ambitious track on *Masterpiece Guitars* features 24 custom-built, blue-finished jazz archtops commissioned by Chinery from today's foremost luthiers.


Steve Howe (left) and Martin Taylor with Larson "Big Boy"

"Recording all those guitars was quite a challenge," notes Howe. "We tried to make it musical as well as demonstrative by keeping the transitions between each instrument smooth."

The *Masterpiece Guitars* CD will be the companion to *The Chinery Collection—150 Years of American Guitars* (Miller Freeman), a book featuring photos and details about the instruments. Both will be available this fall from record and book retailers.

—CHRIS GILL



PORNO FOR PYROS

Beach Boys

THE DAYS WHEN surfing occupied the hearts and minds of America's golden youth may be long gone, but don't tell Porno For Pyros guitarist Peter DiStefano. His very destiny was determined by the sport.

"Everybody in the band surfs," says DiStefano. "In fact, I first met [*Porno frontman*] Perry Farrell while surfing. We take surf trips to places like Bali, Java and Tahiti. When we're not surfing, we play little concerts. I always carry a nylon-string guitar with me, and we played all the songs on the new album in front of island natives prior to recording them."

Natives of a less-exotic sort can now hear fully-fleshed versions of those songs on *Good God's Urge* (Warner Bros.), the long-awaited follow-up to Porno For Pyro's eponymous 1993 debut. The album's lush textures seem light years removed from the bare-bones pop of its celebrated predecessor. Songs like "Porpoise Head" and "Kimberly Austin" wash over the listener in a dreamlike haze, with DiStefano employing layers of acoustic and electric guitars to build a variety of moods. Effects such as sampled feedback, delays and distortion flow in and out of the songs like waves rolling onto a beach, giving the album a wonderfully ethereal vibe, which the guitarist occasionally interrupts with bursts of six-string turbulence.

DiStefano is proud of his playing on the album, feeling that it justifies Farrell's faith in his abilities. The singer hired the then-unknown shortly before the breakup of Jane's Addiction, Farrell's much-heralded earlier band. At a subsequent jam session-cum-audition, DiStefano's playing so impressed Farrell that he asked him to join PFP. DiStefano recalls that his immediate reaction was one of sheer terror.

"I said no, at first," he says. "Jane's Addiction was my favorite band, and I thought, my God, there's no way I can live up to what Dave [*Navarro, ex-Jane's guitarist*] did. Everyone's going to hate me!" But Farrell's response forced the hesitant axeman to give in.

"He showed me about 10 personal letters he had gotten from Steve Vai, in which Vai asked to join the band," says DiStefano. "Perry told me he didn't want to play with Steve Vai—he wanted to play with me. He picked me over Steve Vai! Who could argue with that?"

—**TOM SINCLAIR**

WHAMMY BAR

MADONNABES at a gig in San Pedro. The set included Material Girl chestnuts like "Express Yourself," "La Isla Bonita" and "Vogue." Watt has also busied himself of late recording and performing with **PORNO FOR PYROS**.

Published for the first time in the United States is ***ARE YOU EXPERIENCED? THE INSIDE STORY OF THE JIMI HENDRIX EXPERIENCE*** (Da Capo), an account by Experience bassist **NOEL REDDING** and **CAROL APPLEBY.** Packed with fresh insights, behind-the-scenes intrigue and minutely detailed excerpts from the diaries Redding kept during his time with the Experience, *Are You Experienced?* is a reading experience no Hendrix aficionado will want to miss.

Fans of classic and almost-classic rock will be tickled pink to learn that 12 performances that originally appeared on the "**KING BISCUIT FLOWER HOUR**," the legendary syndicated radio show that has broadcast live rock and roll shows every week since 1973, will now be available on CD. The 12-album series includes individual releases by **AMERICA**, **DEEP PURPLE**, **HUMBLE PIE**, **GREG LAKE** with **GARY MOORE** and **ROBIN TROWER**. "This 'King Biscuit Flower Hour' show was one of the high points of my career," says Trower. "It really captured the power and grace that my band was capable of

ALIVE... AGAIN

Kiss reloads its love gun for a summer reunion tour.

TO MANY *GUITAR World* readers, 16 years is a lifetime. For rock legends Kiss, it's the time that has elapsed since the band's four founding members last played together on the same stage. Kiss Army soldiers have clamored for a reunion ever since, and their beloved heroes—resplendent again in full make-up—recently complied by kicking off a massive 1996 world tour.

"In my gut, I knew this would happen one day," says guitarist Ace Frehley. "Even though whenever I brought it up to Paul [*Stanley*] and Gene [*Simmons*] over the years, they'd dismiss it. But I always felt they were full of shit," he laughs.

The band will be putting on two-hour stage shows, complete with all the explosions, fireworks and smoking Les Pauls a concertgoer could handle, thereby begging the question: Can these 50-year-old rockers meet the physical demands of such a grueling tour?

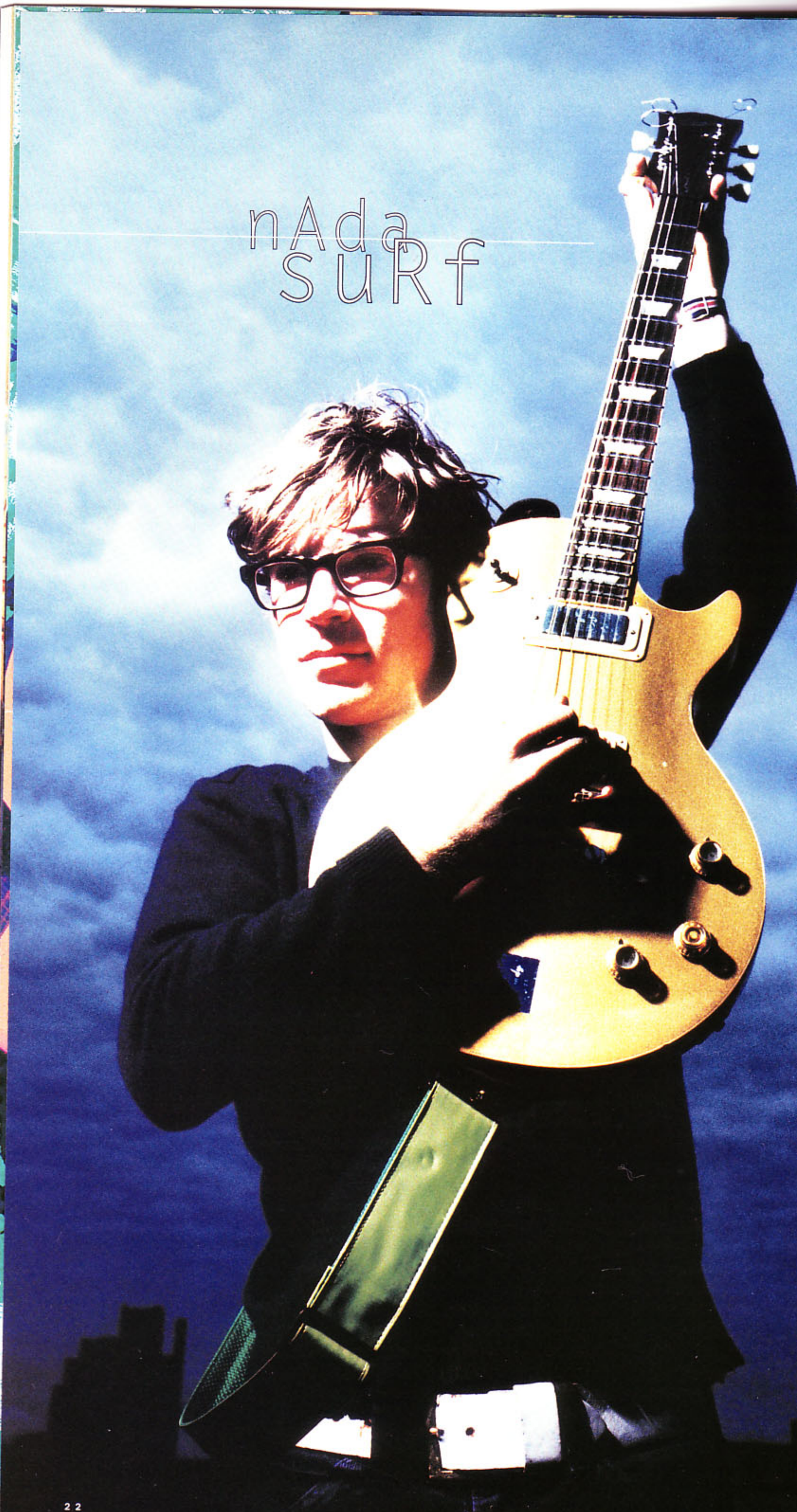
"We've all been working out with personal trainers," says Frehley. "I'm down to 160 pounds, and the costume I'm wearing is actually a size smaller than the one I wore in the late Seventies."

While there's no doubt that the next few months will bring the kind of exposure, ticket sales, fan adoration and money Kiss reveled in during their Seventies heyday, Frehley is especially excited about something of a more personal nature. "It's just nice to play sober and remember the next morning what I did the night before."

Watch for our spectacular, no-holds barred Kiss interview in next month's *Guitar World*.

—**JEFF KITTS**

nAda SURf



"I'M EASILY EMBARRASSED," confesses Nada Surf singer/guitarist Matthew Caws. "I'm self-conscious about the way I dress, the music I play—you name it." Now, you might ask yourself why such a sensitive fellow would aspire to become a rock musician, but for Caws, a little social discomfort comes with the territory.

"Being self-conscious isn't necessarily a bad thing," he explains. "In fact, my biggest thrill is when I've written something embarrassingly honest. It means I've challenged myself. For example, I was at a friend's house recently and I was singing a line from one of our songs that goes: 'I've been trying to be cool ever since high school.' He just started laughing and said, 'You've got to be kidding. You're putting that in a song?' His reaction made me a little nervous at first, but I was being truthful and I felt other people would identify with that feeling. So I kept it in."

As it turns out, Caws has very little to be embarrassed about—Nada Surf's energetic major label debut, *High/Low* (Elektra), is one of this year's more pleasant surprises. Featuring Caws's humming guitar, as well as an inventive, tight-as-a-tourniquet rhythm section, the New York-based band somehow manages to elegantly bridge the gap between the punchy power pop of the early Who and the dense textures found in contemporary indie rock music.

"I was trying to think today of who my guitar heroes were and what they had in common," says Caws. "I guess what unifies players like Pete Townshend, Will Sergeant of Echo and the Bunnymen and Lou Reed is that they play simple music that anyone can play. I love Hendrix, but I didn't want to emulate him because I knew it would be impossible. But those other guys made it seem possible to express yourself artistically with relatively basic tools. They all had lots of style. They could put their personal stamp on an open E chord. That's something I thought I could achieve."

—NICOLE BINDER

Mike Gent (left) and Guy Lyons

THE FIGGS

Macho Men

"I OWE A LOT of my musical sensibility to my dad," says Figgs guitarist/singer/songwriter Mike Gent. "He brought home a lot of cool albums when I was a kid. I heard the first Joe Jackson album [Look Sharp! *(A&M, 1979)*] when I was eight, and I was struck by that kind of raw but melodic approach."

"Raw but melodic" is a dandy description of the revved-up guitar pop to be found on the Figgs' two albums, the just-released *Banda Macho* (Capitol) and its praiseworthy predecessor, *Lo-Fi At Society High* (Imago, 1994). Bouncy, hook-filled tunes like "Bus" and "Girl, Kill Your Boyfriend" are guaranteed to bring tears to the eyes of those who bemoan today's dearth of quality power pop, while the raucous six-string wrangling of Gent and co-guitarist Guy Lyons provides enough electroshock therapy to jolt even the most jaded ear out of the doldrums. *Banda Macho*'s all-for-fun spirit and rugged production (by the band, with an assist from Dave Kahne) add up to a mule-powered kick in the face of the countless lesser bands attempting to mine the same territory.

Gent and Lyons met a decade ago as students at Saratoga Springs High School, in upstate New York, where the two self-professed "rock nuts" soon formed an embryonic version of the Figgs (with Lyons on drums). After the requisite apprenticeship of bashing out covers at parties, the band began performing original material, slowly building a fan base and attracting the attention of industry heavyweights.

In fact, the Figgs might have landed a record deal sooner but for Lyons's odd decision to join the army. After serving his country for three years, he rejoined the Figgs (which today consists of Gent, Lyons, drummer Pete Hayes and bassist/songwriter Pete Donnelly) in 1992, just in time for the band to get signed.

So was the guitarist ready to rock after three years of marching to Uncle Sam's tune?

"I was ready to smoke some reefer!" he says with a laugh. "They piss-test you in the army these days, you know."

—TOM SINCLAIR

WHAMMY BAR

creating."

DAVE NAVARRO, **J.** and **SEAN YSEULT** of **WHITE ZOMBIE**, **FLEA**, the **MELVINS**, **THURSTON MOORE**, **COURTNEY LOVE**, the **BEASTIE BOYS' MIKE D.**, **THE POSIES**, **NOFX** and **D GENERATION** have all contributed tracks to ***A TRIBUTE TO THE GERMS*** (Grass), a salute to one of the Seventies' most legendary West Coast punk bands. Guitarist **PAT SMEAR**, an original Germs member who subsequently went on to play with **NIRVANA** and is today with the **FOO FIGHTERS**, also appears on the album.

Just in time to cash in on this summer's much-ballyhooed **KISS** reunion tour, Shrapnel Records is releasing ***SPACEWALK: A SALUTE TO ACE FREHLEY***. The star-studded album includes rocking contributions from **DIMEBAG DARRELL** ("Fractured Mirror"), **ANTHRAX**'s **SCOTT IAN** ("Rip It Out"), ex-**GUNS N' ROSES** second guitarist **GILBY CLARKE** ("Shock Me") and last but not least, **DAVE "THE SNAKE" SABO** ("Snowblind").

JAKOB'S LADDER

The Wallflowers bloom again.

RARELY DOES A band ask to be released from a major-label record contract after just one album. But when the Wallflowers returned from a year on the road in support of their 1992 debut, they found a lot of unfamiliar faces at Virgin Records.

"We got home from the road and all of our contacts at the company had been fired or had left," says bandleader Jakob Dylan. "We quickly got the feeling that we were not going to be getting much attention. They would have fulfilled their obligation, put out our second record and not pushed it at all."

Dylan spent the next two years getting the Wallflowers out of that contract, searching for a new record label, replacing those group members who'd decided to leave, and, finally, finding a producer and making another record. The result of all his arduous efforts, *Bringing Down the Horse* (Interscope), is a polished and focused collection of rootsy, wall-of-sound rockers and soulful ballads.

"It was definitely trying," Dylan recalls. "The whole process took a long time, and that might have put more pressure on us when we were tracking the record. After waiting two years we wanted to make it worth it. We spent more time making the songs as good as they could have been."

If Jakob Dylan's name rings a bell, it may be because Dylan is, in fact, Bob Dylan's son. Though Jakob doesn't shy away from the connection, he says, he certainly doesn't dwell on it.

"It must have influenced me in some way," says Jakob. "I haven't spent a lot of time thinking about how. It was there—I can't deny that. But I got interested in playing music like most people do. I had friends who played and we would go to shows and buy records. It was the same drive that most people have. In that regard, it wasn't a unique scenario.

"It comes up in interviews and things like that. But when I'm with the group and we're rehearsing or playing, it's not a hot topic. We talk more about what their dads are doing than about mine."

—JEFF COLCHAMIRO

different STRUMMER

By Alan Paul

With his new album, Crash, acoustic iconoclast Dave Matthews once again marches off the beaten path —and hits pay dirt.

THERE IS NOTHING typical about the Dave Matthews Band.

It is a pop band that has sold over three million records without the benefit of an electric guitarist, relying instead on a front-line consisting of acoustic guitar, saxophone and violin. It features jazz musicians playing in their first rock band. The group is interracial, with three black members and two white, and cross-generational, its members ranging in age from twenty-something to late-thirty-something. And then there's Matthews himself, a boyish-looking 29-year-old South African singer-songwriter who dispenses wacky, contrapuntal, percussive acoustic guitar licks.

"Yeah, we're obviously a little different," shrugs Matthews. "We certainly didn't set off to be a huge pop band, and it's nothing any of us could have anticipated. We all just knew that this band was unlike anything any of us had ever played in. We all really believed in it and just decided to take it as far as we could. The sound of the band is just an organic result of what all of us bring to the table. We have a lot of different experiences and influences and it all goes into the mix."

The Matthews Band generates a sound that manages to sound both familiar and fresh at the same time. Clearly, it has struck a chord with rock fans. Two years after its release, their debut studio album, *Under the Table and Dreaming* (RCA), still has momentum. Its recent followup, *Crash* (RCA), is meeting with similar success, debuting at Number Two on the Billboard charts. Musically, the album can be described as more of the same, only more so. In the manner of hits like "Ants Marching" and "What Would You Say," Matthews's new songs—like "So Much To Say," "Two Step" and "Tripping Billies"—once again pull off the nifty feat of sounding like jam sessions, while actually being tightly structured. Ultimately, *Crash* is a "looser" album than its predecessor, more representative of the live shows that earned the Dave Matthews Band a rabid national following before they were even a buzz in a major label bigwig's ear.

"We were more relaxed recording this one," says Matthews, 29, reclining on an overstuffed couch in a New York photographer's studio. "No question about it. We were anxious making *Under the Table* because it was our first time in a real studio. We used click tracks on everything and we recorded all the bass and drums tracks, then the guitars, then the violin, sax and vocals. This time, we cut our basic tracks live, standing in a circle, so we could see each other, which gave us the atmosphere of a live performance. We were able to play off each other and maintain a continuity from song to song."

As a result, *Crash* has an earthier, more organic sound than the band's debut effort, even though there is considerably more audible electric guitar on it, courtesy of Tim Reynolds. An old friend of Matthews, Reynolds also played on most of *Under the Table*, but his playing was largely obscured because he exclusively doubled Matthews's parts. "This time," Matthews notes, "we just said 'Do what you feel,' and Tim added a lot. He became another voice in the band."

In fact, everyone's voice can be heard more clearly on *Crash*, and each member seems to have done something to broaden the group's sound. LeRoi Moore added flute and baritone sax to his alto, tenor and soprano horns, bassist Stefan Lessard brought a six-string and upright bass into the mix, and violinist Boyd Tinsley, a dominant presence in concert who was largely absent on *Under the Table*, shines, soloing more while also playing percussive pizzicato parts and adding textural rhythmic fills. Holding it all together is Matthews's guitar playing. Not surprisingly, he is no average strummer. In fact, he rarely plays open-position chords at all, instead favoring partial chords, fractured lines and percussive fills, often playing counterpoint to Lessard's funk-infused basslines.

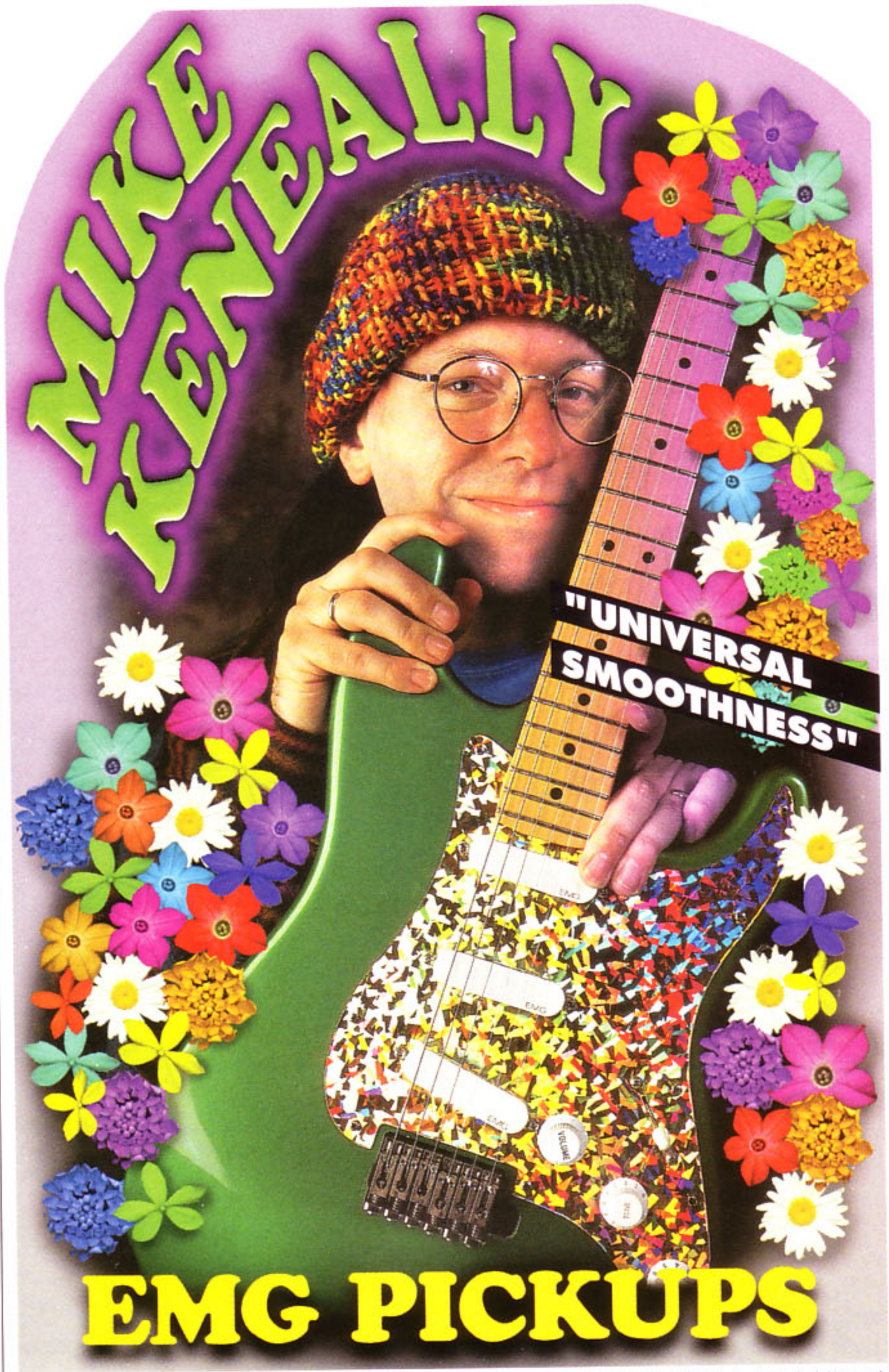
"For both better and worse, I never learned to play in the standard fashion," he says. "At a certain point, I decided I really wanted to get better and try to master the guitar, but I didn't want to follow the normal routine of learning barre chords, then scales. I wanted to treat the guitar like a completely different instrument—like a drum with notes.

"That's an idea that I've had for a long time, and I think it started from hearing players like Robert Fripp and Adrian Belew. Watching Fripp also led me to lots of weird chords and voicings because I saw him do these wild finger stretches and tried to copy them—without realizing that he was tuning his guitar differently. These are all things I was playing with for years, but it didn't really solidify into a style—my style—until I formed this band. Actually, I think the way all of us play has really been affected by the other people in the group. We've grown a lot together."

The growth began five years ago in Charlottesville, Va., where the Dave Matthews Band played its first gig at an Earth Day celebration in April, 1991. The unorthodox lineup had been assembled as an all-star ensemble of "people I'd like to jam with, but never thought would actually join my band," says Matthews. While working as a bartender in Charlottesville, had become friendly with Moore and drummer Carter Beauford, both jazz players of local renown who had no rock experience, and began to discuss music with them.

"I never said, 'I want to have a band with a violin and sax playing all the solos,'" explains Matthews. "I just fell in love with the players. I had written a bunch of songs, but I had no real opinion of what sound I was searching for. I served both LeRoi and Carter a lot of drinks, and somewhere along the way I told them about this tape I was making and asked if they'd be interested in doing some recording, maybe playing out a little. I didn't ask for any commitment—I wouldn't have dared. They were both older than me, and much better musicians. And when I met Stefan, he was some kind of bass prodigy. He was still in high school and was playing upright bass with both Carter and LeRoi, cats twice his age.

"We all got together just to jam and I was blown away. I had never experienced anything like it before. What immediately appealed to me was the spontaneity of their playing.



Everything just flows for them. They didn't think like most other musicians I had played with: 'I've got to remember the next fill.' They just played. The format was totally new for all of us, so we had no idea how to arrange my songs. We all said, 'Let's just play and see what happens.' Luckily, we gelled in a really profound way, and it was obvious to all of us that we should stick with it, keep exploring and see what we could come up with."

Tinsley, a classically trained violinist, joined the band after playing on a demo of "Tripping Billies," a song that appears on *Crash*.

"We had no plans of adding a violinist," says Matthews. "We just wanted some fiddle tracked on this one song, and Boyd was a friend of LeRoi. He came in and it just clicked. That completely solidified the band, gave it a lot more power. My goal was to have a heavy acoustic band. I knew from watching LeRoi and Stefan play jazz how heavy and loud you could be without turning a distortion pedal on, and I wanted to get that across in a rock context. I think that really started happening when Boyd joined and the keyboard player we had left."

Before long, the Matthews Band was gigging regularly at area bars and University of Virginia fraternities, then touring the Southeast college circuit, slowly expanding north and west. Soon they had stumbled into a nationwide circuit of bands that became the H.O.R.D.E. nation, sharing stages with Blues Traveler, Phish and Big Head Todd and the Monsters. All of these bands shared a similar fan base and each had strong followings in different parts of the country, making joint tours mutually beneficial. For instance, Blues Traveler often opened for the Matthews Band in Virginia and North Carolina, while the order would be reversed in greater New York.

Through several years of touring, the Matthews Band established an extremely loyal grassroots following, selling a remarkable 150,000-plus copies of their first album, 1993's live *Remember Two Things*, on their own Bama Rags label, as well as 25,000 copies of *Recently*, a five-song EP available through mail-order only. The Dave Matthews Band probably is the first act to have an eight-page merchandising insert, hawking everything from T-shirts and indie albums to mousepads and screensavers, included in their major-label debut.

"We worked really hard and built things up ourselves instead of waiting for some label to come along and do things for us," Matthews says. "I'm really proud of that. By the time the industry started peering down from its ivory tower, coming around to buy us dinner and give us presents, we were supporting ourselves from the sales of our two indie albums. So we were able to retain control over everything, which is crucial in an industry that doesn't differentiate music from money."

Matthews, a native of Johannesburg, South Africa, moved to America after graduating from high school, eventually settling in Charlottesville with his mother, who had family there. "I got an inscription letter from the South African army and said, 'I'm out of here,' " Matthews recalls. "This, of course, was when apartheid still ruled, and I wasn't going to serve in that army. I really love it there, and have a real pull to go back now because there are some really exciting things going on. Of course, I love America, too, but if the band wasn't doing so well right now, I would definitely be on my way back to South Africa."

Matthews's love of his native land extends to its music. Strains of South African pop reverberate through both his singing and guitar playing, although Matthews insists that he's never intentionally tried to incorporate the music into his own.

"I love African pop and jazz, but I've never thought of what I do in those terms," he says. "I've only written one song that sounds African at all to me, and that's 'Proudest Monkey' [*Crash*], which has a circular structure that I associate with African music. But there's a lot of great, very inventive, very energetic music from there, and if anyone hears it in what I do, great."

"Besides," he adds with a quick smile, "my mom always says that my music reminds her of home, that it sounds African. So it must be true." ●

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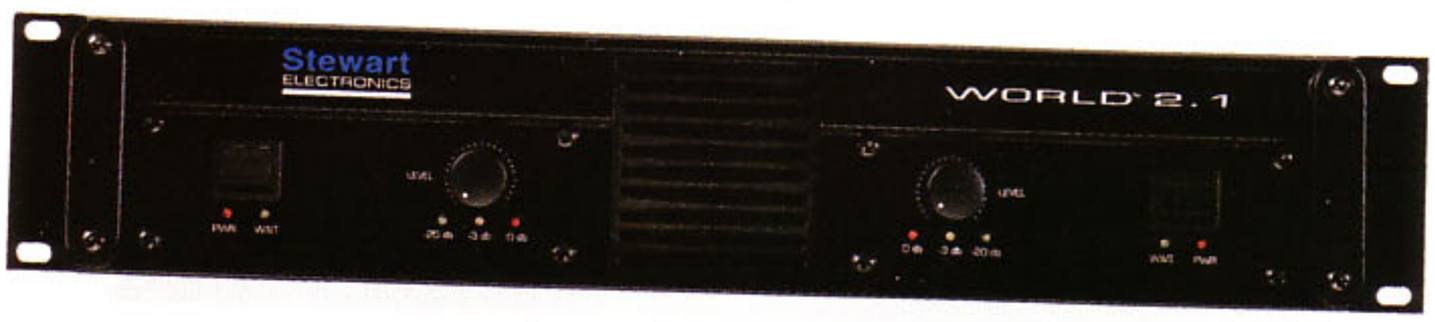

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Drained by anxiety, illness and road exhaustion, Green Day relax by stomping on their punk elders.

by Alan di Perna

GREEN DAY IS a Ford band. Guitarist/singer Billie Joe Armstrong drives a '62 Fairlaine. Bassist Mike Dirnt has a truly ancient Ford van. These aren't vintage showpieces—just solid, American, working-class transport, with decidedly non-professional paint jobs. They're not the kind of cars most multi-Platinum rock stars drive.

Green Day's rehearsal room isn't very grand, either, just a rented garage attached to a rundown little house in a somewhat dicey section of Oakland, California. It's the kind of cramped, dank space where any local bunch of punters might rehearse to play a high school dance—foam rubber and a Manowar poster on the walls, a bong and some drums and

Photography by Jay Blakesberg

amps. When the wind's right and the door's open, you can catch a whiff of cadavers roasting in the crematorium nearby.

"Cadaver . . . I like that word," muses Billie Joe. "It sounds like a big bird or something." These days, Armstrong's hair is mainly purple, with swatches of magenta and rusty-orange-blond around the sideburns. He resumes a discussion he's been having with Dirnt about the new cars their wives plan to buy.

"I told her, 'Get anything you want, as long as it isn't a Mercedes or a Volvo,' " says Dirnt, who's equally disdainful of that other yuppie status vehicle, the Land Rover: "I could kick the bumper *right off* one of those."

Why does Green Day cling so resolutely to its working class roots? If it isn't just a put-on for the press (Billie Joe *could*, after all, have a Jaguar stashed in his garage), then maybe it's a coping mechanism. They've had to deal with an awful lot of success in a very short space of time. One minute they were sleeping on friends' couches in Berkeley punk rock squats. Next minute they were riding their major label debut album, *Dookie* (Reprise, 1994), on a warp-speed course to sextuple Platinum. *Poor* babies, right? But Green Day have had to carry more than the usual load of ideological baggage on their trip to the top. Is it their fault that their brand of cheery, melodic punk rock was just the thing to fill the gaping void left by Kurt Cobain's shotgun?

"A lot of people try to pinpoint where we get our sound from. And they're all pretty much completely full of shit."
—Billie Joe Armstrong

The band's success has earned Green Day the resentment of first-generation punks, who accuse them of becoming rich off something they didn't even invent. The looney-toon trio have also fallen afoul of second-generation punk rock hardliners who reckon that Armstrong, Dirnt and drummer Tre Cool have sold out big-time. All this, of course, means nothing to most Green Day fans, many of whom were born after the late-Seventies heyday of the Pistols, Ramones and Buzzcocks. They just know that Green Day gives them an adrenaline rush they don't quite get from Bush, Blues Traveler or Alanis.

Earlier this year, it looked as if stardom had just become too much for Green Day. They canceled a big European tour midway through—just pulled the plug and went home. Many thought it signaled the end of Green Day. But the guys insist they needed a rest and that the tour was

Mike Dirnt (left) and Billie Joe Armstrong.

canceled because of fatigue, Mike Dirnt's medical problems and the demands of their personal lives (Armstrong and Tre Cool recently became fathers, and Dirnt is newly married). They say they'll be back and have already begun work on a new album, a follow-up to 1995's double-Platinum selling *Insomniac*.

Armstrong and Dirnt have come too far together to pack it in now. They've been friends since they were 10 Billie taught Mike to play guitar when they were still in grade school, back in Rodeo, California, a lower middle class town just north of Berkeley. Dirnt eventually switched to bass, and the Replacements-esque, two-guitars-bass-and-drums band he and Armstrong formed became a turbo-charged trio.

"Mike's bass playing really provides a second melody in Green Day," says Armstrong. "A counterpoint to the vocals."

Dirnt is very much Green Day's secret weapon. He's one of those profoundly solid bass players who hold a group together without calling much attention to themselves. His goofball persona—plaid polyester pants and a doofus grin—belies a quiet thoughtfulness. As soon as they could, Dirnt and Armstrong got out of Rodeo, moved down to Berkeley and became part of the college

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town's Gilman Street punk scene. They released two indie albums, *39/Smooth* and *Kerplunk*, on Lookout! records, before being signed to Warner Bros. and making *Dookie*. Just as *Dookie* signaled a new phase for Green Day, Armstrong and Dirnt believe that their next album will mark another giant step for the band. Not a commercial one this time, but a creative one. The boys are hinting that their next record will be their most ambitious ever.

Will they disappear up their own butts in the process? Or does Armstrong's deft way with a melody have the power to transcend genres and fashions? The answer is being worked out at this very moment in that dingy little garage with the Fords parked outside.

GUITAR WORLD: When did you first discover punk rock?

MIKE DIRNT: I suppose when I was 14 years old.

BILLIE JOE ARMSTRONG: I can remember a few different instances. There were these two guys who introduced me to things like DOA and the Dead Kennedys. Then, in the seventh grade, there was a girl at school who would bring in records like TSOL and say, "Here, listen to this." But I think I

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really started getting into it in 1987 with *Turn It Around*, a double 7-inch compilation record put out by *[punk fanzine] maximumrockandroll*.

GW: Definitely California punk.

ARMSTRONG: Mostly bands from the *[San Francisco]* Bay Area, yeah. There's a certain amount of depth that a lot of the bands from around here had, especially in the mid Eighties.

GW: Billy, where do you get your sense of chord progressions?

ARMSTRONG: From everywhere. I don't limit myself. I was really into Paul Westerberg and Bob Mould, and I think it started there. The Replacements and Hüsker Dü are probably the bands that influenced me most. A lot of people try to pinpoint where we get our sound from. And they're all pretty much completely full of shit.

DIRNT: We always get this thing about how we're trying to sound like the Buzzcocks. I hadn't heard the fucking Buzzcocks when we started.

ARMSTRONG: I thought it was supposed to be the Clash. Or was it the Ramones . . . ?

DIRNT: First off, you can't sound like any of those bands. And secondly, those are probably the last ones in my record collection.

ARMSTRONG: Mine too. Those are all bands I got into later.

GW: A lot of people say you sound like the Dickies.

ARMSTRONG: The Dickies would like to think so. The Dickies would like to think they've influenced everybody. But basically the Dickies are just another Ramones rip-off.

DIRNT: I've never owned a Dickies album, although I did see them live—I snuck into one of their shows at the Berkeley Square. I saw them right around the time of our second album. But by that time, we'd played so many shows it really had no bearing.

ARMSTRONG: Those guys have to be the most bitter old bastards I've ever read about in my entire life. Their whole thing is, "It shoulda been us." Well, fuck you, it's not. It never will be. You're old and you're never gonna write a good song for the rest of your life.

GW: Do you get a lot of resentment from first-generation punk bands?

ARMSTRONG: Sometimes, but not a lot. Henry Rollins has a stick up his ass. He's another bitter old bastard. Basically he's complaining because we've made more money than he has. But hey, Henry, you fucking suck. You were not even close to being the best singer for Black Flag, and you didn't even write the lyrics back then. So why should I give a fuck what you think?

DIRNT: The only band that has any right to be bitter would be the Ramones, because they fucking stayed together. But even then, I don't feel sorry for one of the most

influential punk rock bands in the world—probably the *biggest* punk rock band in the world.

ARMSTRONG: How can they complain? There are bands that were more influential to me who've never seen the light of day, yet even they're not complaining. Take what you've got and appreciate that. I didn't get into punk rock to get famous. It was already a proven fact that you couldn't get famous playing punk rock music. God, we were around for six years before we broke through—from '88 to '94. We did two albums and three EPs.

DIRNT: This was at a time when bands like Guns N' Roses and Van Halen were totally on top.

ARMSTRONG: You know who's another bitter old bastard? Johnny Rotten.

GW: What do you guys think of the Sex Pistols reunion?

DIRNT: We don't.

ARMSTRONG: More power to 'em, if that's what they wanna do.

DIRNT: Bad sex is better than no sex. To tell you the truth, I met Steve Jones.

ARMSTRONG: He's a good guy.

DIRNT: He seemed like a real nice guy. He came up and introduced himself. I didn't know who he was at first; I actually thought he was a reporter or something like that. It was nice to meet him. I invited him out for a beer, but he doesn't drink any more.

ARMSTRONG: I like his guitar playing a lot. I love the Pistols' old songs; the lyrics are really great. And I really like Johnny Rotten's book a lot [Rotten: No Irish, No Blacks, No Dogs, *St. Martin's, 1994*]. But now, he sounds like my grandmother, at times. He really sounds old. And he's so predictable in his comments about us. I mean, be a bit more novel. Try and come up with something new. On top of that, some of the stuff from P.I.L. *[Rotten's post-Pistols group]* was complete shit, as far as I'm concerned.

DIRNT: If they're the spirit of punk rock, then punk rock is dead. And the spirit is floating around like a ghost. We've been asked to do beer commercials and shit like that, and we don't do 'em.

ARMSTRONG: Yeah, those Schlitz and Mountain Dew commercials are paying the bills lately for Johnny Rotten. Doing a beer commercial, for someone of that stature, is pathetic.

DIRNT: It's shitty beer, at that! At least he coulda done a good one.

ARMSTRONG: I have a lot of respect for him. But you have to admit he is a bit full of shit. Excuse me, full of Schlitz. They kept asking us to open a couple of shows for the Sex Pistols, but . . . nah.

GW: So what happened with this last tour? Why did you end it prematurely?

ARMSTRONG: 'Cause we were burnt. We'd been on the road for two and a half years, non-stop.

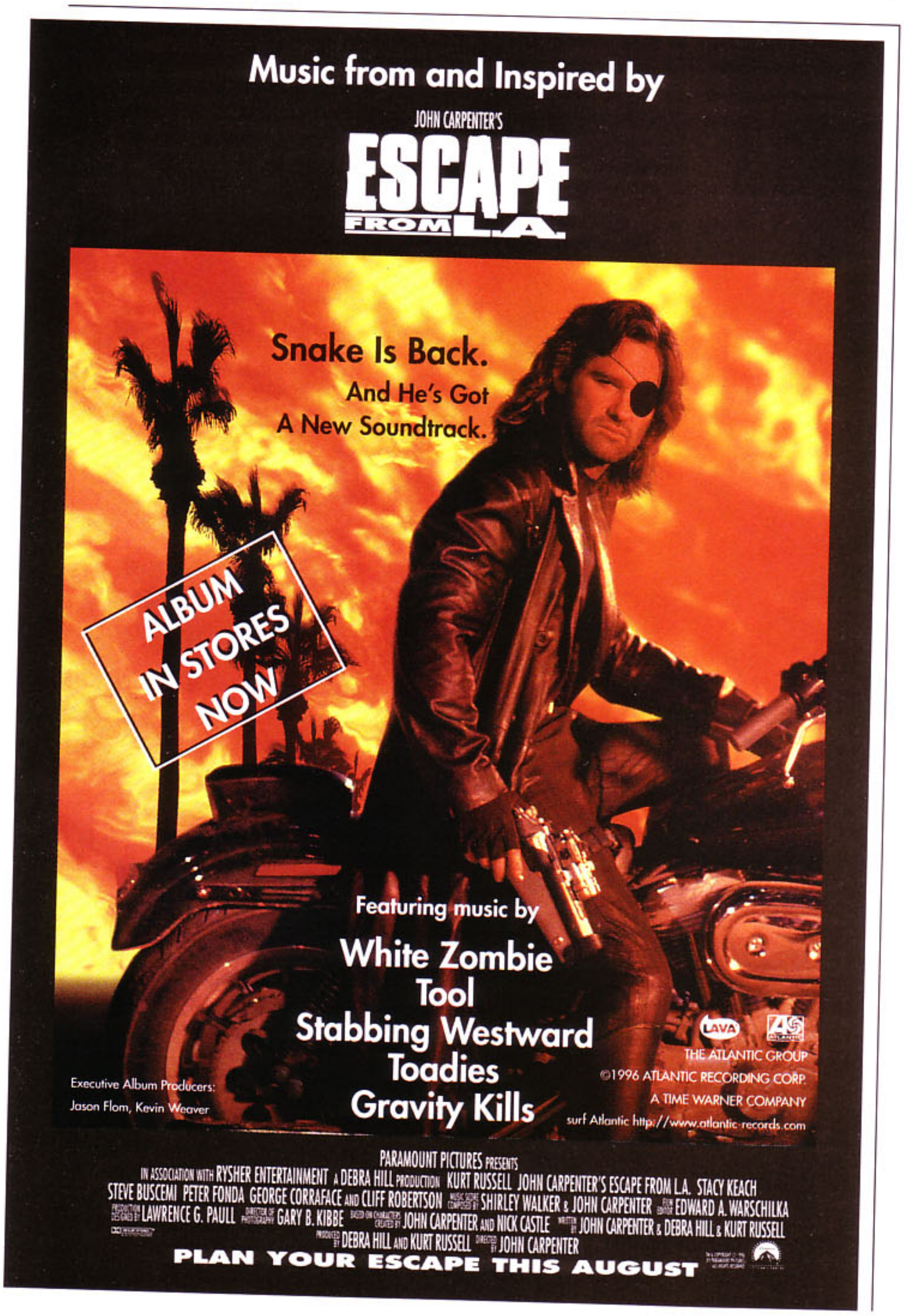
DIRNT: I was having panic attacks every day.

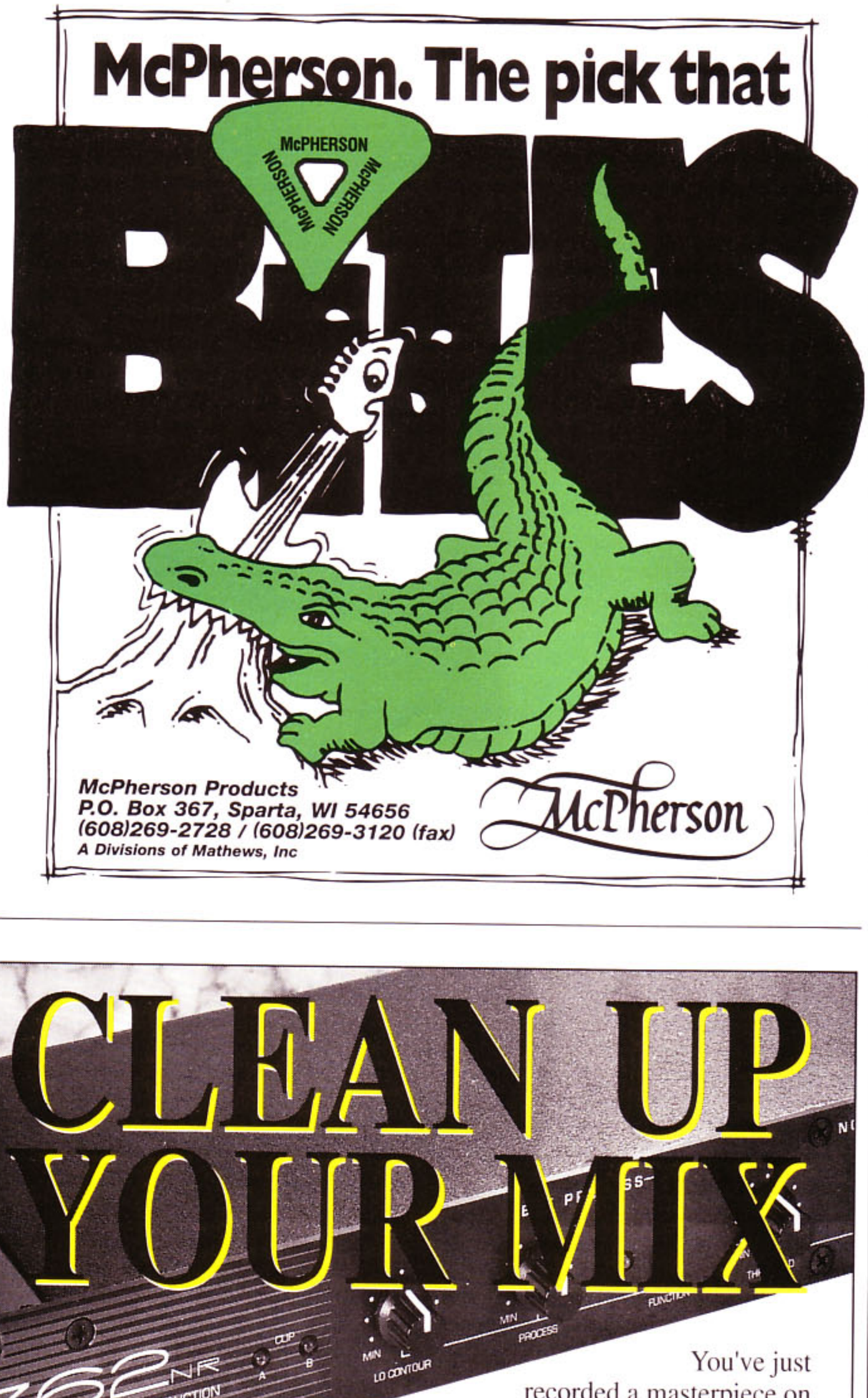
ARMSTRONG: The doctors wanted to fill him with drugs.

DIRNT: Basically, they wanted me on Xanax or Prozac all the time. And I wasn't gonna do it. I'd only take Xanax when I got so nauseous I couldn't go on stage. I would pass out. I'd say. "Oh God, I gotta lie down." Then I'd wake up six hours later, just from exhaustion.

ARMSTRONG: I never thought I'd get to a point where I felt like I was pretending to enjoy myself on stage. But basically I was just going through the motions. We were at the end of our rope. It was mainly me and Mike—we were completely exhausted. The first tour we did was in '89. So we've been touring, on and off, for seven years. And in the past two years, we've done the most touring ever.

DIRNT: This is the first time we put ourselves above the crowd or ahead of the music in any way whatsoever. But, we figured, if we want to keep on making music, we just gotta have a break. It was a stressful situation with our wives, too. You're on the phone saying, "I love you





more than anything—but, we gotta go now. See ya!"

ARMSTRONG: I'd always sacrificed Adrienne and Joey [*Armstrong's wife and son*] for the band. But I wanted to prove something to my wife—that I was willing to sacrifice the band for her. I felt like I wasn't being an attentive parent. The first three years of a kid's life are the most important. His whole identity and personality are formed during those years. My son's at that age now. How could I miss those years? Plus my wife was way overworked as a parent.

DIRNT: Also, I've been having heart problems for the last few years, where I felt like I was having minor heart attacks all the time.

ARMSTRONG: We didn't even know if we would be able to go on tour in '94, because right after we put out "Basket Case," Mike started to have this problem.

DIRNT: The doctors don't know what it is. I'm at the point now where I'm sick of looking for it. If it kills me, it kills me. It's been happening for a long time now, but it's gotten a lot worse. I'll be standing there and all of a sudden I'll feel like somebody's jammed a needle into my chest. I basically drop to the ground, gasping. And then my heart's always sore. It's a scary problem to have with the one part of your body that they don't know how to fix.

ARMSTRONG: I didn't want to write our next album in the unhappy state we were in. That's what *Insomniac*'s all about. But now I'm through reacting to "the whole drama of us going from Gilman Street to Wall Street," so to speak. I'm actually quoting a writer there.

DIRNT: He's quoting a fucking dickhead!

ARMSTRONG: All I want to do right now is studio stuff. I want to write songs and put out the best record we possibly can. I thought *Insomniac* was great. It's one of the most underrated records of this decade. But I think now we need to step away from *Insomniac, Dookie* and *Kerplunk* and *39/Smooth*. We need to redefine ourselves, take a position, a stance, rather than just be reacting to things around us.

GW: So your having ended the tour early doesn't signal the end of Green Day? Or that you're tired of the whole thing?

ARMSTRONG: No. That's the thing: I *don't* want to be tired of Green Day. That's why we quit the tour.

GW: Earlier, you said that *Insomniac* was underrated. People tended to key in on the fact that it sounds a lot like *Dookie*, on the surface.

DIRNT: I think it's very different, personally. It sounds more like we sound in our practice room. When we practice, we face all our

instruments toward each other and pound as loud as we can. That's how the mix of *Insomniac* sounds to me. It's a lot less polished than *Dookie*.

ARMSTRONG: Okay, it's still loud guitar, bass and drums. But I think the mood of it is completely different from *Dookie*'s. For me, lyrically, it's just a gloomier record. It's got a lot of mood swings in it.

GW: Billie, *Insomniac* is the first album where you seem to get into writing from within other characters—from a point of view that's not necessarily your own. Like "Brat," for example.

ARMSTRONG: I like to write in the first person because I'd rather talk shit about myself than someone else. I do like to create characters. That song is about how envy develops into jealousy.

DIRNT: "Brat" is very much about a typical UC Berkeley college student, a rich kid. They get to run around being politically correct all the time on Mom and Dad's monthly checks. We never had it so easy.

ARMSTRONG: Although there were people who were stupid enough to say it was about me. I read a couple of reviews like, "Oh, I'm so sure that Billie Joe needs his parents inheritance." Hell-ooo. You completely missed it. You're so ready to slag that you missed the point entirely.

GW: Is "Geek Stink Breath" autobiographical? Or is the self-destructive speed freak in that song just a character?

ARMSTRONG: That's autobiographical. "Basket Case" was about someone else. That's more of a character. "Pulling Teeth" was about Mike.

DIRNT: My wife accidentally broke both my arms.

ARMSTRONG: Yeah, Mike, I'm sure it was an accident.

GW: It's a nice twist. There aren't many "battered male" songs.

DIRNT: My wife and I had a pillow fight. I was running away from her and ran into a horizontal beam.

GW: So for this new album, are you gonna bring out the cello section?

DIRNT: Well, we fooled everyone last time. We did all these interviews saying we were gonna have string sections.

ARMSTRONG: In a lot of ways, *Insomniac* was a step backwards, as far as writing pop songs goes. We limited ourselves more and broke things down more than we even did on *Dookie*. But now that we've got this foundation, we can go anywhere I want. You can experiment so much within the framework of the three-minute song without becoming "experimental." The thought has crossed my mind to make the next record a double album. Not a double CD,

Continued on page 180

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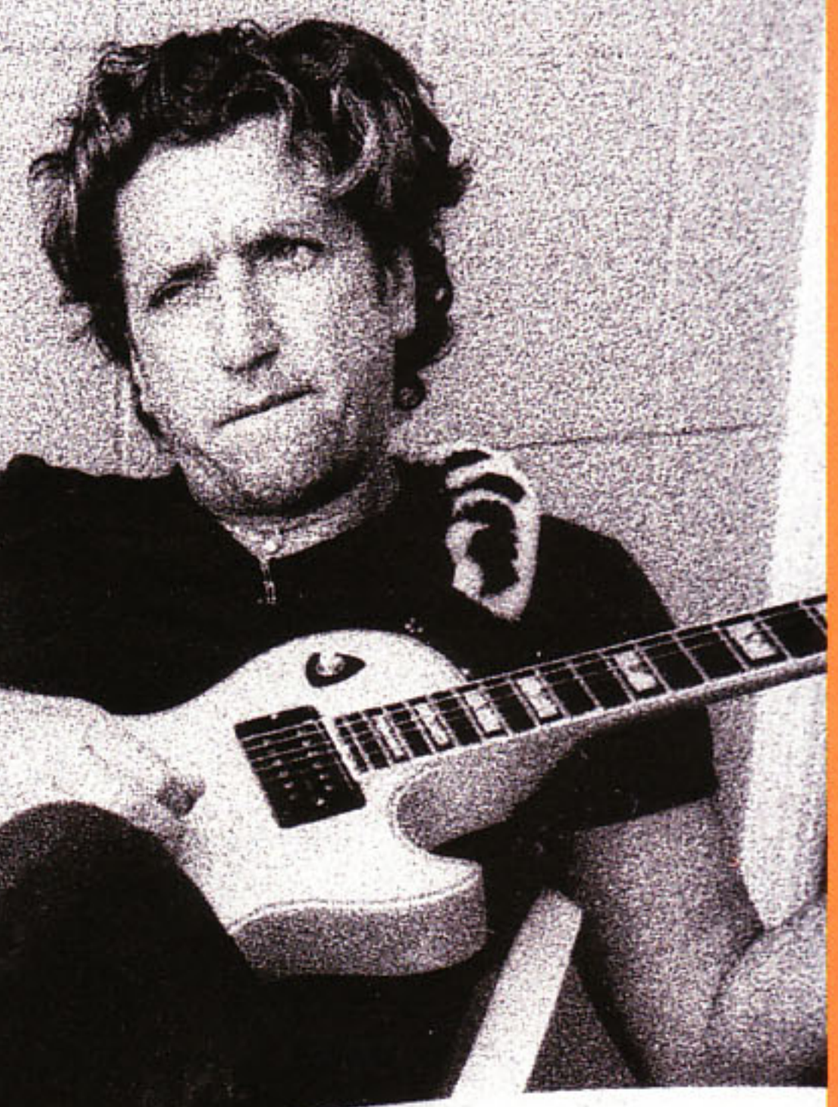
BY ALAN DI PERNA

JAL healing



After 20 years of long-distance bickering, the Sex Pistols have reunited for a summer tour and an upcoming album. Johnny Rotten and Steve Jones reveal what it's like to kiss and make up.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY MITCH TOBIAS

A 40-YEAR-OLD Johnny Rotten stands in the lobby of the Foghorn Hotel, in a Los Angeles boat marina, ready for a day of press interviews.

He looks younger than his age. His skin is as white as a fresh sheet of typing paper, its paleness intensified by his carrot-colored hair. After a terse greeting, he produces a nasal inhaler and rams it into one nostril. He plugs the other nostril with the inhaler's lid and breathes in deeply, arms back, his scrawny chest thrust forward like a rooster's. Ahhhhhh.

The Sex Pistols don't want your love. They want your money. Your hero worship doesn't interest them. Nor does your contempt. They don't care if *Never Mind the Bollocks* changed your whole life, or if you're grateful to them for

radically altering the course of rock and roll with one big, loud, disruptive belch. And they *certainly* don't give a toss whether you think their current actions violate some notion of second-generation punk political correctness. No, they've come back for your cash, the one thing they got precious little of the first time 'round.

What they did get was plenty of publicity. The first time the world heard the term "punk rock," it was coupled with the Sex Pistols' name. They scandalized proper England by insulting the monarchy with their class war cry, "God Save the Queen." They were bounced off two consecutive record labels within months of being signed. Tabloids the world over just *loved* the Sex Pistols: The Spitting! The Puking! The Safety Pins!

The Sex Pistols even got respect, although most of it came after they broke up. *Never Mind the Bollocks* routinely appears on critics' "Ten Best Rock Albums" lists. Their angry, guitar-driven sound is essential to our idea of what rock is. The band's place in rock history is as substantial as the Beatles', the Rollings Stones' or David Bowie's. But not their bank accounts. The Pistols split up and Sid Vicious died long before public recognition caught up with them. Hefty amounts of cash went up in smoke during lengthy and bitter litigations with the band's former manager, Malcolm McLaren, leaving the four original Pistols—Johnny Rotten, Steve Jones, Paul Cook and Glen Matlock—short on the very stuff that makes a working-class lad turn to rock in the first place: The Bucks.

They're hoping to correct that small omission with their much-publicized reunion tour, which began on June 21 in Finland, and a live album comprised of material culled from the first few dates of the tour.

It would have been so much more comfortable for everyone if the Sex Pistols had remained safely in the past tense. They wouldn't be around to outrage the kind of people who are easily outraged, or to shatter the illusions of adoring Pistols fans. But shattering illusions is what the Sex Pistols were put on this earth to do. And so they're back.

The Foghorn was Rotten's choice for an interview location. It's the kind of hotel where fat, balding insurance amen bring their secretaries for a squalid lunchtime shag and lower middle-class families spend nightmare vacations.

"Oh, it's so third rate," John purrs, stroking the cheesy wood paneling in the lobby. Steve Jones is late, as usual, so Rotten and I repair to the head Pistol's chamber and start without him. Rotten calls for his mid-morning refreshment—Coronas and Marlboros. Before settling down to talk, he grabs the room's cheap, plastic wastebasket and places it conveniently near him for use as a spittoon. Over the course of the next hour, he makes an admirable effort to fill it to the brim.

GUITAR WORLD: Rock and roll is arguably more boring, stagnant and self-indulgent now than it was in 1977. Do you think the Sex Pistols can have the same kind of revitalizing effect that they had then?

JOHNNY ROTTEN: I would hope *not*. I'm not doing this for anybody else but myself! Sod that. That's bollocks. We're not championing any cause here, or waving a flag and asking you to rally 'round. 'Cause that's what went wrong with punk in the first place. They all jumped on the bandwagon, so to speak, and started getting into uniforms and codes and strict disciplines, which was anti-punk. It's not what you wear, it's what you do and what you are that counts. And sod all the rest of that baggage. I mean it's a press thing, really, isn't it? They do love to categorize and label. The record shops like it, too.

GW: Nor was your original intent, I take it, to save rock and roll.

ROTTEN: No, of course not. Nothing like that at all. I never liked rock and roll; I still don't think I do. Every now and again there's a good record, but that's the same with any form of music. If you're going to limit yourself to one style, you're very, very stupid. You will have a narrow outlook on life. And that's not healthy. It's all out there—a wonderful world of entertainment. And I want the lot. Some would call that the spoiled brat syndrome. But I don't think so. That's just them being insular and blinkered. Oy, here's Steve.

[Steve Jones joins us. He's wearing a pair of wraparound shades. His hair, which is greased back, rockabilly-style, is just starting to go gray. The Sex Pistols guitarist looks like one of those guys who's got a questionable '78 Barracuda he wants to sell you. As soon as Jones arrives, Rotten launches into a tirade about an interview with the Ramones hed recently seen:]

ROTTEN: Joey Ramone was slagging us off for reforming, saying we're too old. I mean that's hilarious. He must be 48, and he's apparently the youngest one of them. I love the way they like to point fingers and leave out the facts.

STEVE JONES: Oh, that's that old New York thing, isn't it. That they started punk. There's a real resentment I feel from that New York crowd.

ROTTEN: They were nothing but art school brats, the lot of them. Spoilt little middle-class kids.

JONES: With Brian Jones hairdos, you know what I mean? It was hardly punk, was it?

GW: Who made the first move toward this reunion?

ROTTEN: There's been endless talk over the past 15 years about the Pistols getting back together. We just started calling in some of these offers and seeing if they were real. And a lot of them weren't. But one thing led to another. It's a matter of convenience for us to do this now. It's not a problem. Whereas, years ago, it would have been, for me, I must say. Until I put my book out *[the autobiography,* Rotten: No Irish, No Blacks, No Dogs *(St. Martin's, 1994)]*, I really wasn't up for this at all, in any shape or form. But I cleared out all those ghosts. All those bad memories. And found out that they weren't so bad after all. A change of heart.

GW: So when was the first time the four of you actually sat down together in a room and discussed this thing?

JONES: February, wasn't it? It was in England.

JONES & ROTTEN: [*simultaneously*] Three days before the press conference. [*Rotten emits his "demented medieval dwarf" laugh.*]

GW: What was that meeting like?

JONES: For me, it felt like the 18 years since we were last together hadn't passed. Just like the next day. When you have the kind of chemistry we do, you don't particularly have to like each other.

ROTTEN: Not at all. You just get on with what you have to get on with.

> tha[illegible]e're a young pop band." –Johnny Rotten

JONES: There's an understanding among us all. *Especially* in a band like the Pistols, which had such a big influence and was such an important band. To me, all that was automatically there when we saw each other 18 years later. It's okay, as long as you know that, and you're not doing it to be friends or any of that other bollocks.

ROTTEN: None of that male bonding crap.

GW: So this is strictly a business thing?

JONES: No, it's not . . . . Well, yeah, we wanna make dough.

ROTTEN: As we *always* did!

GW: Were things awkward with [*bassist*] Glen Matlock at first? I mean, you guys have said some pretty nasty things about him over the years.

JONES: Oh, he's a *wanker*, isn't he?

ROTTEN: [*laughs*] So what? Live with it. Life's cruel. Then you die. And Glen's a smart lad. I'm sure he'll come out with some pretty

fuckin' volatile statements too. So what? That's part and parcel of it. That's just the way we are. That's the way we always were with each other, and always will be. There's not much room for dishonesty among us. Don't have the time for that.

GW: Retrospectively, how do you rate Matlock's contribution to *Never Mind the Bollocks* [*Warner Bros., 1977*], from a songwriting point of view?

ROTTEN: Well, he was there for the songwriting, yeah. And that was it. I know a lot of Americans are into this Sid thing. If you want to know where the show business was in the Sex Pistols, it was with Sid. That's what Malcolm manufactured. That's when it all got kind of silly and wrong. This is the real McCoy. There's the difference. We wrote the songs with Glen.

JONES: When Sid joined, it got really dark and gloomy and fuckin' . . .

ROTTEN: Gothic.

JONES: Like the circus is in town. Know what I mean? No one was interested in hearing us play, really. It was to see what was going on. It wasn't about music anymore.

ROTTEN: *[contemptuously]* It became *fashion*, didn't it? And clone punks. And to this day, they're still into that. You see on them on the King's Road in London. The same studded leather jackets and the mohawks, but it's all just a uniform. Join the fuckin' army, if that's what you want.

JONES: As far as songwriting goes, Matlock had good ideas. But if he had done his ideas on a solo record, it would've sounded like shit. Because when they got molded through the four of us, they became great songs.

ROTTEN: I've said this too: if it was all me running the show, it would be bloody unlistenable. See, we know that about us. We worked off each other—against each other—and that's what made it such fun. The songs still stand. I haven't heard anybody come anywhere near it.

GW: It's uncanny how good *Bollocks* still sounds.

ROTTEN: Now there's going to be the purists out there, aren't there? "Oh no, he missed a word! That guitar's in the wrong place! Oh, noooo!!!" But the Pistols live—I've always said this—when it really mattered, we'd be the biggest disappointment. It wasn't deliberate. Things just weren't properly organized. And on top of that, we really don't care, when it comes down to it, about being the number one rock and roll nice band. It's never been like that. You get what you're given and you be fucking grateful for it—or fuck off.

"It's surprising how many people haven't got a clue who we are."
—Steve Jones

JONES: Half the time the Pistols was going, for the first part of it, fuckin' everyone hated us. We'd go up north and . . . .

ROTTEN: Terrible. The violent geezers.

JONES: They hated us. It wasn't like it is now, where everything's accepted. We were a real insult to people. Dumb fuckin' northerners up the north of England would be slingin' bottles and shit at us.

ROTTEN: And then waitin' outside. It would be the four of us and a driver. We'd go in a transit van up north. Load our own equipment

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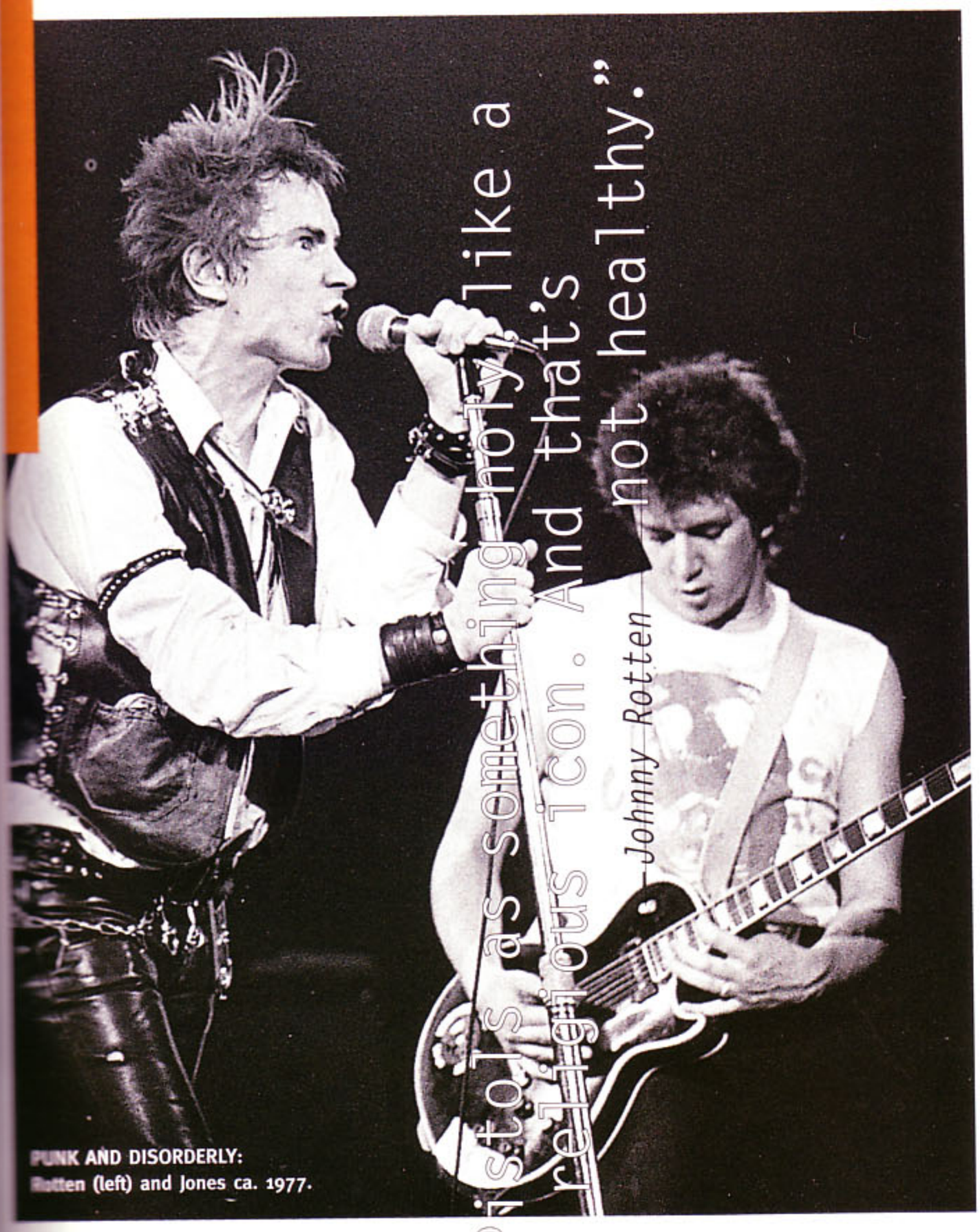
in, set it up, play and leave. But they'd all be waiting outside to "sort us out." And this'd be nightly. Extremely unpleasant behavior. I don't think any of the other punk imitations went through that. We kind of cleared the road for them.



PUNK AND DISORDERLY: Rotten (left) and Jones ca. 1977.

JONES: Looking back on all that, it was real neat. Looking *back* on it.

ROTTEN: Romantically speaking, those were the best times. But what wasn't good was something like our show at Brunel University, when Sid was out of his face on drugs. A lousy P.A., no monitors, couldn't hear shit. Far too many people in that aircraft hangar. The whole thing became ugly.

GW: Did you ever get caught by any violent goons?

ROTTEN: Many times. I have a huge scar down one leg, and a knife was put through here *[exhibits the scarred heel of his hand]*, and came out here *[displaying another scar on his finger]*. Done by guys who *[thuggish voice]* "loved their Queen, and how could I say something like that about the royal family?"

GW: Have you formed an approach to performing the songs on this tour? Are you going to attempt to replicate the old sound?

ROTTEN: Same instruments, innit? What do you expect? There'll be no great walls of new modern equipment.

GW: What about new material? Any ideas you'd like to try out?

ROTTEN: No. Not yet. Don't know. Who knows? It ain't like that. We don't sit down and go, "And next week, we're going to have a new song all formatted . . ." This ain't the Clash. That would be their way of approaching it.

JONES: We never did write like that. We always wrote down on Denmark Street, out in the West End of London, in a little rehearsal place we had. We'd all show up there and then we'd just write a song. John would come down with some lyrics.

ROTTEN: But it would be haphazard.

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SEX PISTOLS

There'd be no plan. Nothing.

JONES: Nothing like, "Oh, let's go to your house and work on ideas." It was all in that one room. So I guess that's gonna be the same now. That worked. That was the chemistry.

GW: Is this reunion . . . .

ROTTEN: Oh, *don't* use that word—it's terrible.

GW: Well, what should we call it then?

ROTTEN: The Comeback Kids? No, none of those things. We're doing some gigs. That's about it.

GW: So there was no impetus from, say, the remaining Beatles getting back together?

ROTTEN: No.

GW: The Who are going to do a reunion show in London's Hyde Park.

JONES: The Who? They've done about 30 farewell gigs, them.

GW: Well, it's not a farewell gig.

JONES: We don't know what it is in our case. We just wanna play. Again.

ROTTEN: It's just that at any of the gigs we play, there'll be the Sex Pistols. You either like it or you don't. And tough tits if you don't. We ain't out to prove anything—certainly not to prove that we're a young pop band again, because we were never a pop band to begin with. I never had those kind of girlie aspirations. Didn't want to be loved.

JONES: Do *you* think people begrudge us making money?

GW: Probably no more or less than they do anybody else who makes money.

ROTTEN: I think that's more of an English attitude that's kind of crept in here. Which is a shame, because America never really suffered from that bullshit. And it all comes from that—what do you call them? The politically correct. The students. The people we've always hated anyway. The worst gigs we ever did was playing those bloody universities. Spoiled brats was all you'd have. *[affects upper-class, intellectual accent]* "Oh, but you cahn't play." Fuck *that*—what's that got to do with it? Grab a hold of this cob's head, baby.

GW: I don't think it's that people resent your making money. But you are going to get that faction who feel somehow betrayed.

ROTTEN: Well, there's all this new punk lot, isn't there? Who think, "Oh, money's bad and wicked and evil." Well, yes, it is. But I'd rather have it than some other cunt. And you try living without it. Quite frankly, as I've always said, I ain't no communist. I live in the West because I like the West. And if I didn't like it here, then I could fuck off to Russia. And look what happened there.

GW: What do you think of Green Day and Rancid?

A Righteous Buzz

by Chris Gill

Peter Shelly and the Buzzcocks reach for new highs.

THE BANDS FROM Britain's class of '76 voted most likely to succeed—the Buzzcocks, the Clash, the Damned, Generation X, the Jam and the Sex Pistols—all dropped out before punk graduated to the mainstream. But in 1989, a few years before the great punk revival, the Buzzcocks decided to give it another go and reformed. Their comeback may not have made headlines like this year's Sex Pistols reunion did, but it was successful enough to prove that the Buzzcocks were still a potent force on the punk rock scene.

Since reforming, the band has toured and recorded consistently. Last year, the Buzzcocks released the acclaimed live album, *France* (IRS), and this May they put out their fifth album, *All Set* (IRS). When they appeared last June in London's Finsbury Park at a festival that also featured the Sex Pistols, the Buzzcocks played to their largest audience ever.

COCK ROCKERS: (from left) Steve Garvey, Pete Shelley, Steve Diggle and John Maher, ca. 1978.

Arguably one of punk rock's most influential bands, the Buzzcocks have inspired several chart-topping artists, including Nirvana, Green Day, R.E.M., Elastica and Offspring. Fine Young Cannibals scored a hit in the late Eighties with their cover of the Buzzcocks' "Ever Fallen In Love," and countless bands have imitated their poppy melodies, buzzsaw guitars and personal-issue lyrics.

"Unlike records by more overtly political bands, I think that our old albums still sound contemporary," notes Buzzcocks singer/guitarist Pete Shelley. "The songs aren't tied down to a specific place in time because I was singing about personal things that affected me then and still affect people today. The music isn't subject to a 'sell-by' date. It's still as exciting to people now as it was when they picked it up new."

GUITAR WORLD: What have been the most significant changes within the Buzzcocks over the last 20 years?

PETE SHELLEY: There have been changes, but not very major ones. It's still four people with guitars and drums making noise. One of the hardest things at the moment, compared to '77, is that we have too many songs to play now. Back then we only had a handful to choose from.

GW: What is one of the most misconstrued aspects of punk?

SHELLEY: There is so much. Originally, when all the bands started—the Damned, Sex Pistols, Buzzcocks and the Clash, which in August of '76 was all there was—there was this misconception that it was a huge scene. But in '77 the predominant cultural phenomena were "Saturday Night Fever" and disco, and there were probably only a few hundred people who were into punk.

Afterwards a lot of bands came along with a definite image of what punk was about in their minds. Sometimes the original bands were dismissed as not being punk, among them the Buzzcocks. But whether the Buzzcocks are or are not punk is irrelevant. The philosophy that fueled the band is more important. It was about not being reliant on the music business to supply all your needs. It was about doing it yourself. All the first punk gigs were organized by the people in the bands. It wasn't done through agents and managers.

Punk music is characterized by loud, fast guitar chops and catchy songs. It's a need that won't go away, no matter what fads may come and go. When we started in '75, we were listening to Iggy Pop, the Kinks and the Troggs.

BUZZCOCKS

I was inspired by the noise and the element of risk involved. It's a motivating form.

GW: Many punk bands that emerged later picked up on the Clash's politics. But the Buzzcocks always wrote about personal issues.

SHELLEY: We wanted to be honest and admit that we were vulnerable. In a world of spectacle and idol worship, being personal *is* a political act. We were trying to destroy that superstar mentality of overbloated invincibility that heavy metal stadium acts were shoving down our throats.

GW: What is the key to getting that sharp, refined Buzzcocks guitar sound?

SHELLEY: I turn up the gain on the amp until it makes a nice, distorted noise. Then I try to play as much as possible in what little time is available. That's it, really. If you have two guitars playing rhythm backed by a tight rhythm section, then you've got all the proper elements.

It's more important to work on your songs than on your playing. I just try to get the right sound. I've been playing Gordon Smith guitars, which are made in Manchester, for the last 19 years. I plug them into a Yamaha FX-500 multi-effects processor that goes into a rack-mounted stereo Marshall power amp and a 4x12 cabinet. But even though I've got all these different sounds available on the processor, I keep it on one sound. It's like a piano. The sound of a piano doesn't change. It's how you play it and what you play on it.

GW: Why has it taken so long for punk to appeal to a mainstream audience?

SHELLEY: All the major trends in music have taken the establishment by surprise. Punk is a hard thing to control because its basic message is that everyone can do it, and I don't think that record companies like the fact that anyone can do it. They want to control what people listen to and to be the gatekeepers. But I believe that audiences are smarter than the record companies think. People have always liked this music, but it just took a while to reach everybody who wanted to hear it. Of course, then the record labels figured out that they could make money from it and signed up as many bands as possible, making it into the flavor of the month.

In '76 the idea of making money by doing what we were doing was preposterous. We thought we were making the most uncommercial music possible. In fact, we purposely tried to make music that *wasn't* going to be played on the radio. I don't know what we did wrong!

Punk is still around because it was a gradual revolution. Trends that succeed quickly tend to go away just as fast, but the revolutions that prevail are the gradual ones because nobody is controlling them and there are no leaders—only heroes. ●

SEX PISTOLS

BODIES: (clockwise from top) Paul Cook, Johnny Rotten, Glen Matlock, Steve Jones.

ROTTEN: Rancid is a hilarious example of that uniform-grabbing. The tartan bondage pants, all neatly pressed and dry-cleaned. The "punk jacket" thrown over the top. It's bullshit. They look like they just come out of a boutique.

GW: On a musical level, what do you think of them?

ROTTEN: Same thing. Very, very Clash-like. The Clash is all those outfits can really deal with. They can never really deal with the Pistols. 'Cause we're a little bit too real, too odd, too full of content.

GW: Granted, there's never been a convincing band of Pistols imitators.

JONES: That Green Day Billie Joe guy is kind of funny. I just saw an interview with him last week on MTV.

ROTTEN: Ah, he's got a good sense of humor! I'll give him that. The T-shirt concessions joke he made about us. . . .

JONES: "I am the Anti-Christ. Please buy our merchandise."

ROTTEN: I put a fax through to him and said, "Fine, you can sell T-shirts at our gigs."

JONES: I like that kid. He's pretty smart.

GW: How do you rate them, musically?

JONES: They're poppy.

ROTTEN: Tra la la la la.

GW: What is the most revolting Sex Pistols cover either of you have ever heard?

ROTTEN: Oh, was it Megadeth or . . .

JONES: The one I played on? *[Megadeth's "Anarchy in the U.S.A."]*

ROTTEN: Where the singer got the words wrong? I loved it! Funny, that. Now, was it Megadeth?

JONES: Well, they did it. And Motley Crue.

ROTTEN: Motley Crue's version was hilarious. Now there's a band that's sold millions and millions of records, and they just *couldn't* get it right.

JONES: They all play it too fast.

ROTTEN: Yeah. They don't understand—the

VinylFetish

by Chris Gill

The Joy of Sex Pistols on Record

THE NUMBER OF Sex Pistols records on the market is surprising, considering that the band released only one "official" album, *Never Mind the Bollocks, Here's the Sex Pistols* (Warner Bros., 1977) and played only a few dozen shows before breaking up. *Bollocks* remains the only truly essential Pistols record, containing the band's best A-sides with Rotten on vocals ("Anarchy in the U.K.," "God Save the Queen," "Pretty Vacant" and "Holidays in the Sun"). Also recommended is *Flogging a Dead Horse* (Virgin U.K., 1980), which compiles the Sex Pistols singles and contains some great non-LP B-sides like "No Fun" and "Did You No Wrong." Collectors should try to get their hands on the out-of-print, limited-edition *Sex Pack* (Virgin U.K., 1980), a collection of six singles, including one with the post-Rotten and Vicious songs "Black Leather" and "Here We Go Again," which are only available in this package and on the rare Japanese best-of album, *The Very Best of the Sex Pistols*.

Boasting a handful of inspired, Rotten-led songs and a few amusing moments (such as Sid Vicious's hilarious rendition of "My Way"), *The Great Rock 'n' Roll Swindle* is primarily a post-breakup Cook and Jones concoction with ludicrous guest vocalists such as renowned British train robber Ronnie Biggs ("God Save the Sex Pistols") and Eddie Tudor-Pole of the short-lived schmaltz band Tenpole Tudor ("Who Killed Bambi" and "Rock Around the Clock").

In the mid Eighties, a flood of live recordings and studio outtakes was released, some of which are of dubious origin and may not be the Sex Pistols at all. On the other hand, a few of these posthumous releases, such as *Live at Chelmsford Top Security Prison* and *The Mini Album* (both on Restless), would be great additions to any Sex Pistols fan's collection. The remainder, however, are only for the truly Sex-crazed.

Anyone curious about what the Sex Pistols might have sounded like had they stayed together should check out the late-Seventies and early-Eighties post-Pistols releases by the individual band members. Surprisingly, most of these efforts were far removed from punk rock. Bassist Glen Matlock, who co-wrote most of the original Sex Pistols tunes, formed the Rich Kids shortly after being kicked out of the band. Produced by ex-Bowie guitarist Mick Ronson, the Rich Kids' only album, *Ghosts of Princes in Towers* (EMI U.K., 1978), shared the Pistols' raunchy guitar-rock sound, but most of their songs (such as the single A-sides "Rich Kids," "Marching Men" and "Ghosts of Princes in Towers") were sophisticated, power-pop masterpieces—a sharp contrast to the Pistols' simple three-chord rock.

Like the Rich Kids, Steve Jones and Paul Cook's first post-Pistols foray, the Professionals, was also pop-oriented. Unlike the trash they turned out in the post-Rotten Pistols era, Cook and Jones came up with some finely crafted singles with excellent B-sides, such as "Just Another Dream"/"Action Man" and "1-2-3," backed with smoking covers of the Velvet Underground's "White Light, White Heat" and Elvis Presley's "Baby I Don't Care." Full of sing-along anthems and catchy hooks, the Professionals' one and only and sadly out-of-print album, *I Didn't See It Coming* (Virgin U.K., 1980), is an underrated and highly recommended gem that defied the early Eighties' punk and New Wave norms.

Shortly after his departure from the Sex Pistols, Johnny Rotten formed Public Image Limited and reclaimed his given name, John Lydon. Only nine months after leaving the Pistols, Lydon released the single "Public Image"/"The Cowboy Song," enclosed in a "newspaper" sleeve. The A-side is arguably Public Image Limited's finest moment ever, with Keith Levene's reverb- and delay-drenched guitar establishing a sound that U2's The Edge exploited a few years later. The band's first two albums, *Public Image Limited* (Virgin U.K., 1978) and *Metal Box* (Virgin U.K., 1979; released in the U.S. as *Second Edition* on Island, 1980), dabbled in dub, noise and aggressive ambient rock, maintaining a punk attitude even if the music couldn't be classified as such.

Only Sid Vicious's post-Pistols efforts can truly be called punk. Unfortunately, he was a better icon than a musician, and his only pre-mortum album, *Sid Sings* (Virgin U.K, 1979), is a largely forgettable affair that is valued only for the cover art, which depicts the pale, scarred, sneering Sid at his most vicious. ●

Pistols have never been a 100 miles an hour band. We're very, *very* different from that. We take it much slower. *More* deliberately. It's more definite, that way. High speed is just bullshit.

JONES: It loses its power when it's too fast.

GW: Were your tempos sort of New York Dolls-influenced?

ROTTEN: Um, not the Dolls. I don't think they *had* a tempo, did they? They'd get in fairly fast, start to drift in the middle and then catch up at the end.

JONES: I love the Dolls, myself.

ROTTEN: They were a brilliant catastrophe. Their shame was that they were at the wrong end of glitter rock and glam. So they kind of missed the boat, taking that makeup and lipstick stuff to the ultimate end.

JONES: I was really into the Faces. I would go to a lot of their gigs. Then I went to one where the New York Dolls were opening for the Faces. That was the first time I saw the Dolls. And I went, "Fuckin' 'ell, this is brilliant, 'cause it's so real and out of control." And that's what I liked about it. It wasn't the songs and the lyrics.

ROTTEN: It was the attitude. The attitude was A-1 on.

JONES: You didn't know what was going to happen next. Well, actually that night their fuckin' drummer died. You know what I mean? Their first drummer. Whatever his name was. *[Billy Murcia—Ed.]*

GW: To what extent, if any, did Malcolm McLaren encourage you to sound like the Dolls?

ROTTEN: None. Never.

JONES: He didn't have anything to do with the music at all.

ROTTEN: He never turned up for rehearsals. Hardly turned up for the gigs unless there was some way he could be *fashionably* seen.

JONES: If Malcolm was so great, how come Bow Wow Wow [*another band managed by McLaren*] wasn't a great success? How come anything he touched after the Pistols fell apart?

ROTTEN: He puts himself up as this great media and financial manipulator, and really the guy's penniless. Think about it.

JONES: He's had to resort to talking about nostalgia on TV shows. That's his claim to fame now, really. I heard recently he was in Australia giving a lecture—boring everyone to death for like seven hours with one lecture.

GW: Do both of you live in L.A. now?

ROTTEN: Yeah, both of us. I like it here. I had to move out of England because I couldn't put up with the bullshit anymore. The population,

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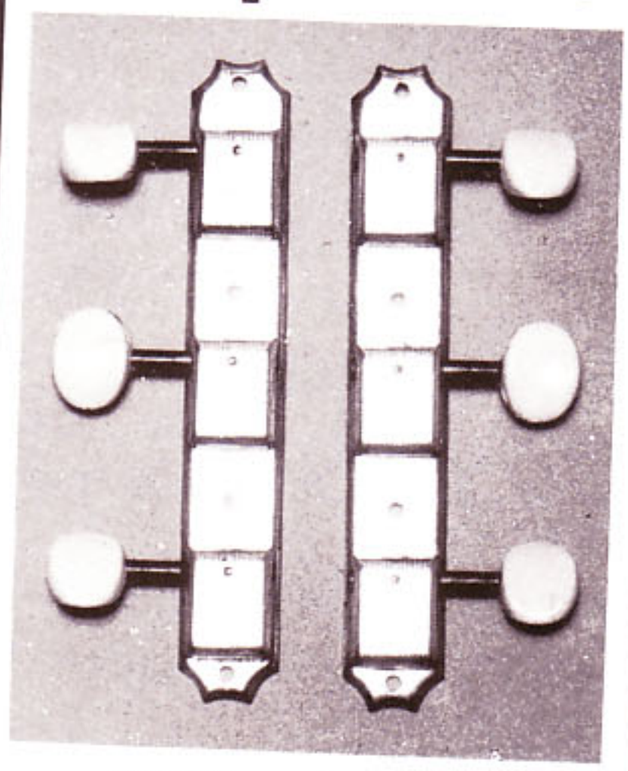

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to my mind, is too apathetic, lazy and set in its ways.

JONES: It's too expensive over there too. Hard to get by.

ROTTEN: I can't afford to live in London. Can't do it.

JONES: There's nowhere to park a car there.

ROTTEN: L.A. is cheap and cheerful. And the weather ain't bad.

GW: What's your opinion of grunge?

JONES: Sounds like Black Sabbath to me.

ROTTEN: Yes it does. Worse, like Deep Purple—the sillier parts of Deep Purple, at that. When [grunge bands] get good, they kind of sound like Bad Company. But when they really want to be bad, they get into Joe Cocker territory.

And all this in a plaid shirt and a pair of second-hand jeans. Don't tell me they don't cultivate that image; I know damn well that they do. They work very hard at not having an image, which is like reverse snobbery. And they're cheating themselves. Because, although I don't believe in being a fashion victim, you are what you wear. You wear clothes because you want to project a certain idea. That does not mean you should run out and imitate bands or any of that shit. You should be an individual. And all of that lot have no individuality whatsoever. It's back to a uniform. The tatty shirt and the tatty pants.

GW: John, what's the status of your band, Public Image?

ROTTEN: Hiatus. Whatever that word means. At last I got a chance to use it. On hold. I've got a solo album that I'm holding back, because I can't bung that out while I'm doing this.

GW: So you might take up again with Public Image?

ROTTEN: In about a year or two. But no quick rush.

GW: Does reforming the Sex Pistols seem like a step backwards after Public Image?

ROTTEN: No. Five years ago it would have. It would have seemed to me to be like two steps backwards. But it doesn't now. It seems to fit in quite well with what I have in mind for myself.

GW: Which is?

ROTTEN: Not to be so damned serious about things. To not treat things so preciously. I think that was a real problem for a long time: I treated the Pistols as something sacrosanct and holy, like a religious icon. And that's not healthy. That was very stupid of me. And absolutely against any attitude that the Pistols ever had. We're icon busters, more or less. When we treat ourselves as gods, we fuck ourselves up.

GW: Why didn't punk happen big in America the first time around?

ROTTEN: What do you mean, "happen big?" We did a tour and that was it. *[laughs]* You mean why didn't it spawn a million imitation bands? Well, that's not my problem. I'm glad it didn't. You have to look at the way America was set up then, financially. It was quite different; it wasn't quite as dilapidated as it is today. And punk definitely is a reflection of your dollar being devalued, prices being raised and unemployment. It comes from that. The closest thing to punk was rap, for quite some time. And I don't think rap could have started without that initial punk kick.

GW: So now that America's on its way to becoming a second-rate world economic power, is the time more ripe for punk?

ROTTEN: I think it's to America's benefit for things to be that way. Because for too long, you've celebrated your own big, bad wonderfulness and not related to the rest of the world. That's a very naive outlook. And very dangerous. Now you're gonna have to wake up.

JONES: But it hasn't changed anything, this wave of so-called punk. It's very corporate.

ROTTEN: They've got it wrong. They come at it from the nice melodies angle rather than the content. There are some serious subjects out there that should be dealt with. And none of these punk bands want to know about them. That doesn't mean political subjects. 'Cause we all know how that ends up, going back to the Clash. They just end up sloganeering, taking quotes and turning them into choruses. I think that's a very lazy attitude. That's *something* like what's happening here, but without the political content.

GW: On the other hand, the Buzzcocks are together! *[see sidebar]*

ROTTEN: Oh, well, they're hilarious, you see. They stand the test of time.

STEVE: They're not with *[guitarist and vocalist]* Pete Shelley though, are they?

GW: Yes. Shelley and *[guitarist]* Steve Diggle are still in the Buzzcocks, with a younger rhythm section.

JONES: I saw Diggle when I was over in England.

ROTTEN: They had their own little thing, see. They weren't imitating anything.

JONES: They came and saw us, Shelley and Howard Devoto *[the Buzzcocks original vocalist]*, when we played Leichester Free Trade. And they formed a band. But they gave it its own little twist. They didn't just copy us.

ROTTEN: They used the idea of being in a band, and that's where it ended. And that was fine. Without variety, it all becomes very, very sterile. And currently, at the moment, there *is* a place for Rancid, isn't there? 'Cause they're like, I dunno, they fill that little mold that Billy Idol filled when he first came over. Mr. Nice Guy. They're hilarious. They're a cartoon. But I don't know if they could be on the same bill as us.

JONES: I don't think they wanna be.

GW: Why do you say that?

ROTTEN: 'Cause it would burst their bubble.

GW: They might be honored to.

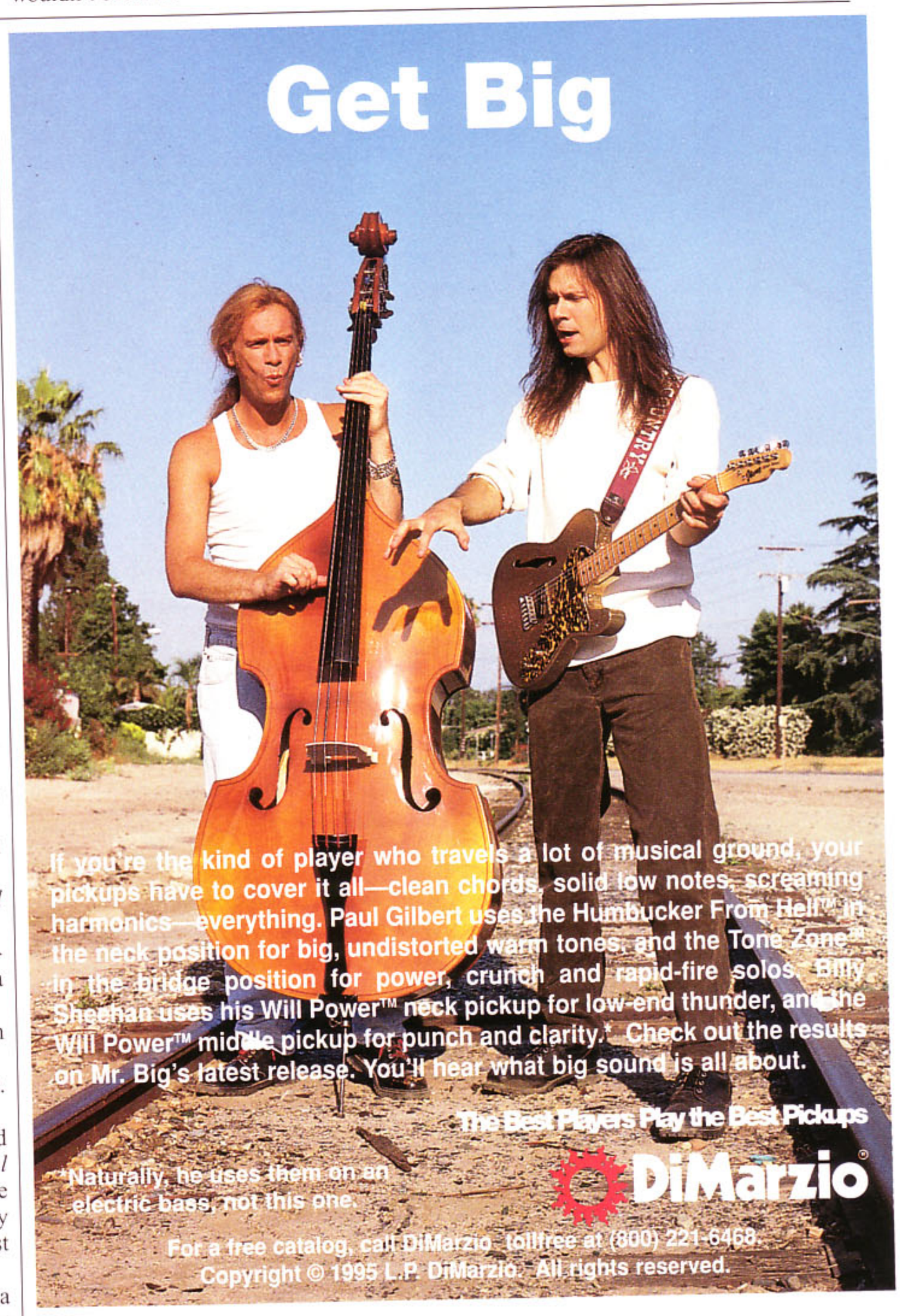
JONES: Actually, a lot of these bands don't want to tour with us.

ROTTEN: Yeah, they're shying away like you wouldn't believe.

JONES: They probably think their fans are not going to like them because they're playing with the old farts.

ROTTEN: There's so many myths about us. The film *[The Great Rock and Roll Swindle]* created a lot of that bullshit. And the *Sid and Nancy* film. I get asked from time to time—and it's hilarious, but fucking annoying at the same time—people come up to me and say, "Oh, are you the one that died in the Pistols?"

JONES: It's surprising how many people haven't got a clue who we are. Lately I get, "Well, who's going to be singing in the band?" If people don't know about music, it's fine. But it's not like we're some



unknown fucking band.

GW: Who do they *think* is going to sing?

JONES: A lot of them think the singer was Sid Vicious. They don't fucking know.

ROTTEN: Check out some of the internet stuff too. It's hilarious. "Oh, the Pistols would be nothing without Sid. Everybody knows he wrote all the songs and sang 'em." Hee hee hee hee. There is all of that to contend with. But that ain't no problem.

GW: Is there anything either of you guys could have done to stop Sid from ending up the way he did?

ROTTEN: No.

JONES: We broke up. And then it went on, and then he killed himself. I never saw him. I didn't really like being around him too much. It was all too fucking dark and depressing with him and that bird *[Vicious's girlfriend, Nancy Spungen]*.

ROTTEN: Sid's problem was that he believed that New York myth—the glamour of heroin and the underground scene. But it was all fantasy. Sid was a romantic. And, as you know, romance always ends in grief.

GW: It seems like he was a naive, innocent kid, released from the protective shell of the Pistols and dropped, defenseless, into that whole scene.

ROTTEN: No. Sid was a compulsive in this respect: before the Pistols, he was a huge Bowie fan. He'd just spend his entire life trying to look like David Bowie. And he obviously didn't look anything like him. It was pointless, stupid and hilarious. And then he tried to look like a punk, and he got that wrong. Then he tried to live that New York lifestyle, and that . . . mmm . . . was a temporary situation.

GW: Is there any chance the Sex Pistols might turn out to be a more permanent thing this time—beyond the tour and the live album?

ROTTEN: No. What for? *[laughs]* Don't know. Shit happens.

GW: So it *could* happen . . . .

JONES: Don't know. That's the answer.

ROTTEN: If you're gonna waste all your waking moments just thinking about what could be or what should have been, you're a real fool. You just have to deal with what is. And that is a daily occurrence.

GW: So did *[British session guitarist]* Chris Spedding play any of the guitar tracks on *Bollocks?*

JONES: No! God, I hate that fucking question.

ROTTEN: Ask Chris. He'll tell ya. No.

JONES: Before we did *Bollocks*, we did a three-song demo at this studio, and Chris Spedding kind of produced. And that was it. He didn't play on them. It was at *[veteran British Invasion producer]* Mickey Most's studio, wasn't it?

ROTTEN: Yeah. Weird studio. Very odd looking. Spedding did the demo as a favor, 'cause he thought *[in a goofy voice]*, "There's nothing bloody wrong with them, uh, uh, uh." I don't even have a copy of those demos. I just had a little cassette which deteriorated over time. They were kind of trashy. But it was kind of fun being in the studio, seeing all those flashing knobs for the first time.

JONES: That was the first time we'd ever been in the studio.We did three songs in one day: "No Feelings," "Pretty Vacant" and "Problem."

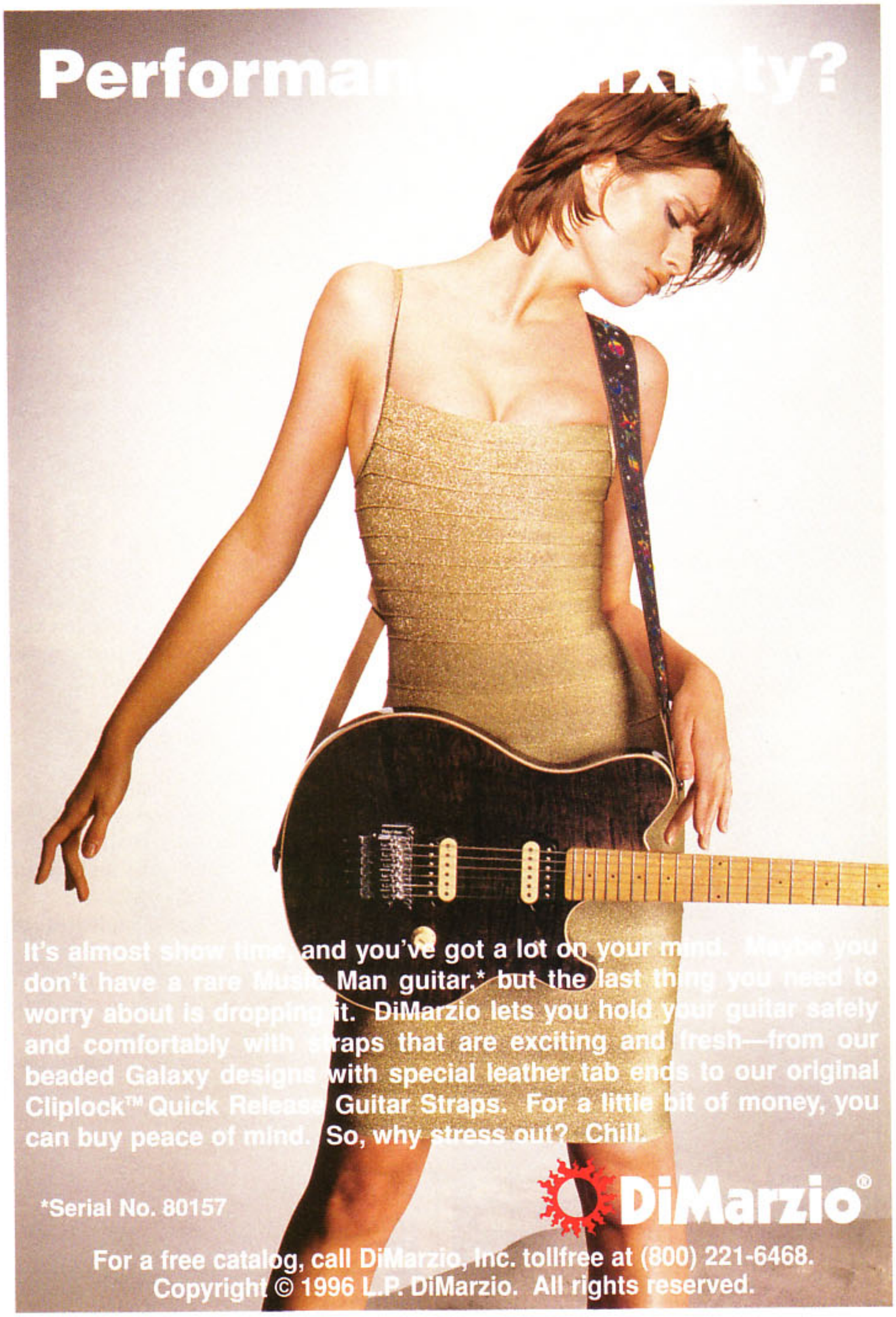
GW: Is it true that the announcements and crowd noises on the *Chelmsford High Security Prison* album *[a popular Pistols bootleg, see sidebar]* were faked?

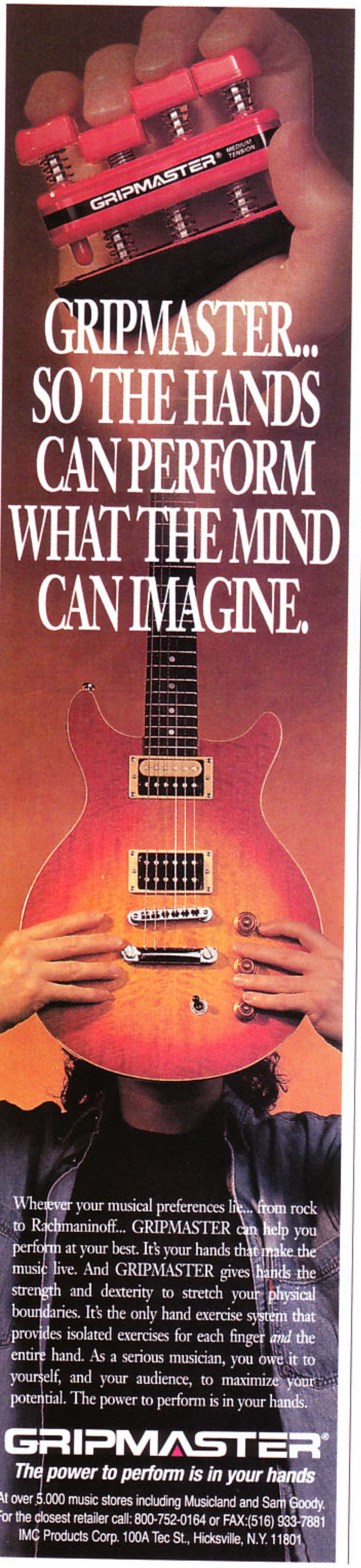
ROTTEN: I haven't heard that bootleg, so I can't comment on that.

JONES: That audience was a pretty gruesome lot, though.

ROTTEN: Yeah. These were real killers, people like that, in a high security prison. It was their silence that worried us. I've never seen more drugs in one place in my entire life, though.

JONES: There was a guy down the front who was on acid. He was out of his mind. They kept telling him to sit down. He was





UNCHAINED MELODY: (from Left) Johnny Rotten, Paul Cook, Steve Jones and Glen Matlock belt one out for the kids.

pretty funny.

ROTTEN: And he was a lifer. Don't want to find out why. It's funny how all these serial killers turn into hippies when they're inside, innit? Anything for a quick parole. We also played two orphanages and things like that. You must also remember that we played a very wide span of bizarre venues. We were banned practically everywhere in England and had to take whatever opportunities to play that we could find.

GW: Another area of controversy is the number of guitar tracks on *Never Mind the Bollocks. [To John]* Somewhere, I can't remember if it was in your book or Jon Savage's *[England's Dreaming: Anarchy, Sex Pistols, Punk Rock and Beyond (St. Martin's, 1992)]* . . .

ROTTEN: I said there were 21 guitars.

GW: Right.

ROTTEN: I was *LYING!!! [laughter]*

JONES: Also, Sid didn't play on *Never Mind the Bollocks*. Or actually he's on maybe one track, farting away underneath the other bass.

ROTTEN: Yeah, but we had to replace it.

JONES: He was in hospital with hepatitis, thank God. He kept wanting to come down. *[mimics fucked-up voice]* "Let me pway the bwass on that."

GW: Last time we spoke, I think you told me Matlock played . . .

JONES: He's on "Anarchy in the U.K." We cut "Anarchy" before we did *Never Mind the Bollocks,* with Chris Thomas.

GW: And all the other bass parts are played by you?

STEVE: Yeah. Fumblin' away there.

GW: Is there anything you're as angry about now as you were about the English monarchy back then?

ROTTEN: Yeeessss. And that's my bloody business for the moment. You think I'm bloody gonna give you advance material? Cheeky cunt. Everything in its time. There's no rush with the Pistols. We don't rush through our songs. We don't rush through anything. We do it all at a steady, even pace.

GW: Someone expressed the theory that you might just take the money and not do the gigs.

ROTTEN: I think I expressed that theory.

JONES: That would be great.

GW: But you've said that this is not about the money.

ROTTEN: I've also said it is about the money. You work it out. I don't do nothing for nothing. I expect to be paid. I work hard for what I do. Harder than most.

GW: I think what you were saying is that you're not hard up for the bucks.

ROTTEN: Oh no. Hardly desperate. I have enough to get by, and that's good enough for me.

GW: Is it about the music, then?

ROTTEN: No. It's about content. Always has to be. Everything has to have a point and a reason. But not a conclusion. If anything works in this world, it's this: that you pose more questions with each answer. Answers just open up more questions. That's success in life. If you know that and can deal with it, then this is a very good planet for you. If you're looking for easy answers to anything, you're fucked. *You* are the problem. [*quoting*] "And the problem is you."

JONES: Hey, isn't that a song?

ROTTEN: Certainly is. *[gobs]* ●

Revolution

BY J.D. CONSIDINE

"The only band that matters"—that's how an Epic Records ad campaign in the early Eighties summed up the Clash. Naturally, a lot of punk partisans (including a few members of the Clash itself) objected to the slogan, claiming that it was corporate, un-punk and just plain wrong. Weren't the New York Dolls more seminal? The Ramones more influential? The Sex Pistols more incendiary? Blondie more popular? "The

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The story of the Clash, four English punk lads who shook the world.

From Left: Mick Jones, Paul Simonon and Joe Strummer.

Photo by Pennie Smith

only band that matters," indeed!

And yet . . .

In the two decades since the Clash played its first gig, supporting the Sex Pistols at a club in Sheffield, England, the band has achieved a stature no other punk act can match. Sure, the Sex Pistols's story is better, what with its wealth of scandal and tragedy, but the Clash matched the Pistols anthem for anthem: "White Riot" for "Anarchy in the U.K.," "London's Burning" for "God Save the Queen," "Career Opportunities" for "Pretty Vacant."

What's more, the Clash epitomized the whole of punk, not just its anarchic glee. Thanks to Joe Strummer's pointed, class-conscious lyrics, the group had a genuine sense of politics, one which spoke not only to the emptiness of commercialized youth culture (as in "1977," which declared "No Elvis, Beatles or the Rolling Stones") but also addressed larger issues like the abuses of capitalism ("Complete Control") and American foreign policy ("Washington Bullets"). And unlike today's ultra-doctrinaire punks, the Clash saw punk rock as being a matter of attitude, not musical style, and so folded everything from reggae and rap to folk and disco into its sound.

Above all, the Clash had a solid sense of rock and roll mythology. It wasn't just a matter of being steeped in the proto-punk sound of the Stooges and the MC5; the band had an abiding respect for the purity of the rock ethos, and was as apt to cheer its heroes as it was to sneer at those who would see the music merely as a means of "turning rebellion into money."

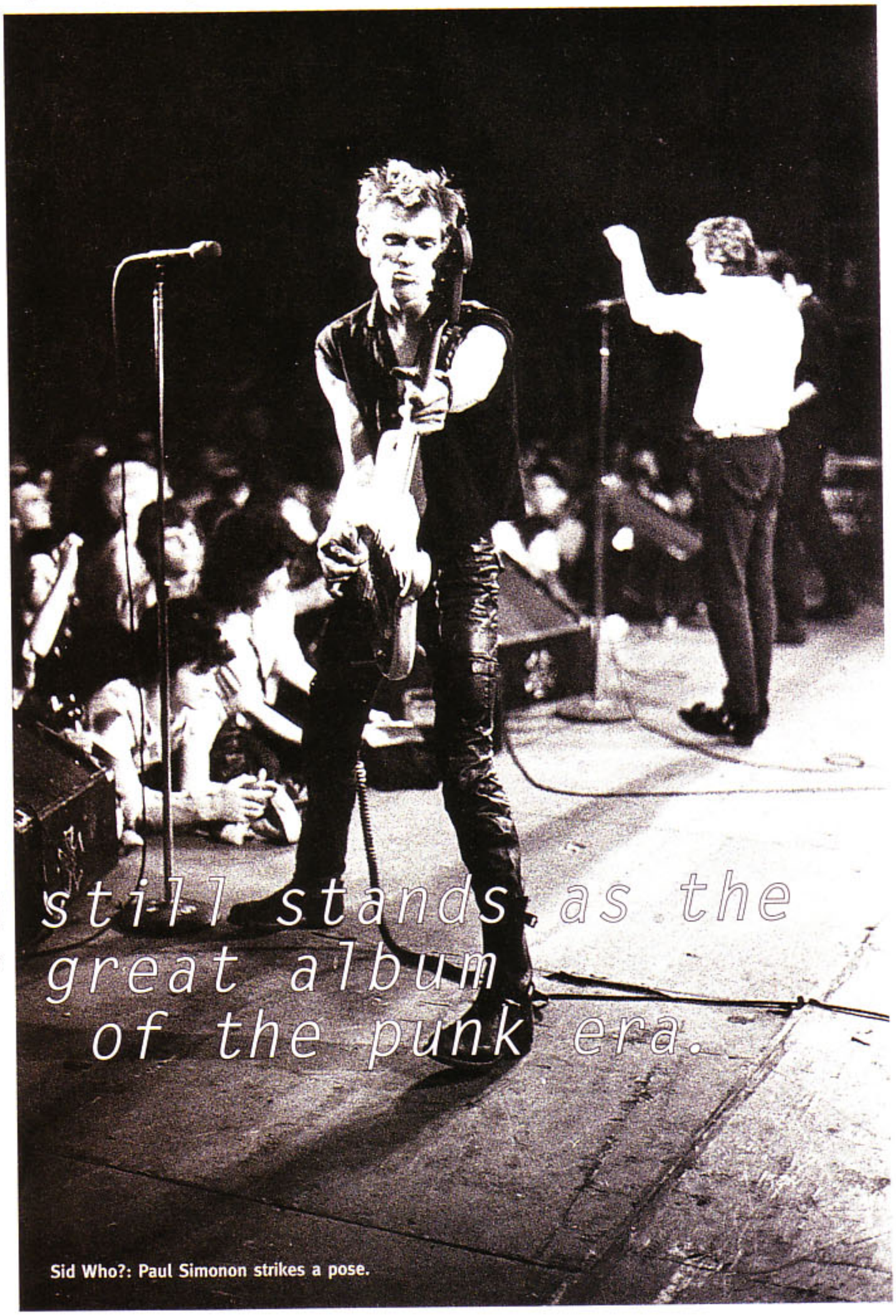
The Clash still stands as the first truly great album of the punk era.

★ ★ ★

We're a garage band
We come from garage land
—"Garageland," *The Clash*

BEFORE THE CLASH there was the London S.S., which was less a band than an ongoing attempt to get a band going. It was set in motion by guitarist Mick Jones and bassist Tony James (who would later form Generation X with Billy Idol), and spent the better part of a year auditioning drummers and singers—among them future Clash members Paul Simonon (a wash-out on vocals), Nick "Topper" Headon and Terry Chimes.

At the same time, Joe Strummer (born John Mellor) was singing with the 101ers, a pub rock outfit that gigged regularly around London and cut a single, "Keys to Your Heart," for the Chiswick label. In April of 1976, however, a scruffy young outfit called the Sex Pistols opened for the 101ers at the Nashville Room in London. Although Allan Jones of the British pop weekly *Melody Maker* was hardly impressed, deriding the Pistols as a "band of incompetents," Strummer was blown away. "As soon as I saw them . . . I just knew," he told journalist Caroline Coon (who would briefly manage the Clash). So, when manager Bernie Rhodes approached him shortly afterward about joining the new punk group Jones was putting together, Strummer was ready and willing to take a chance.



Sid Who?: Paul Simonon strikes a pose.

Originally, the line-up included future P.I.L. guitarist Keith Levene along with Simonon and Chimes. But Levene left in September due to artistic differences, and Chimes (who was jokingly credited as "Tory Crimes" on the band's debut) split the following spring. It was hardly the smoothest start.

Until you consider the music, that is. Even though half the band (Simonon and Strummer) wasn't quite ready for the studio, and the production is appallingly flat and tinny, *The Clash* still stands as the first truly great album of the punk era. Where *Never Mind the Bollocks* came across as four singles afloat in a sea of B-sides, *The Clash* delivered both power and consistency, from the breathless double-time of "Janie Jones" to the snarling feedback of "White Riot" to the stylized reggae of

"Police and Thieves."

There was also something distinctly different about the band's sound. For all their verbal rebellion, the Sex Pistols were musical conservatives, content to back Johnny Rotten's inimitable caterwaul with an instrumental approach that rarely wandered beyond basic power chord rock. By contrast, the Clash not only had a flair for guitar arrangements but also knew how to work disparate stylistic elements into its sound. So "Hate and War" played a skanking rhythm guitar against the four-on-the-floor aggression of Chimes's drumming, while "London's Burning" fleshed its chorus out with a choked guitar riff that flirted with funk even as it evoked the power of Pete Townshend.

Thanks to its lo-fi audio, *The Clash* was originally deemed unreleasable in the U.S. After it sold 100,000 copies on import, however, Epic cobbled together an American edition of the album in 1979. Taking advantage of the time lag, the label swapped in several British singles—"Clash City Rockers," "Complete Control," "I Fought the Law" and the immortal "White Man in Hammersmith Palais"—making the album an even more awesome piece of work.

This revised version was actually the Clash's second release here; *Give 'Em Enough Rope* was the band's real American debut. Produced by Sandy Pearlman (then known as the man behind Blue Oyster Cult), its sound was as muscular as its predecessor's was anemic. This didn't exactly go over well with the critics, many of whom equated crappy sound and unpolished performances with artistic authenticity (doesn't that sound familiar?) and so quailed at the album's big-and-beefy production. Not so the band. Headon, who had replaced Chimes the year before, was particularly pleased, saying that "to get a producer who got such a great drum sound was really great."

Still, *Rope* was hardly the band's best work. Although there were some standout moments, like the brash reggae-rock fusion number "Safe European Home" and Jones's tender, tuneful "Stay Free," much of the album seemed to retread turf the band had already covered (compare the Kinks-style intro of "Guns on the Roof" to "Clash City Rockers"). But the fact that the band was both willing to take chances and eager to broaden its palette set the stage for *London Calling*, the group's most brilliant effort.

Had the band merely refined its original formula, and kept the emphasis on politicized punk and reggae-style rock-

Continued on page 184

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Death or Glory

by Jon Savage

Jon Savage, author of *England's Dreaming*, the definitive chronicle of British punk rock, recalls the turbulent existence of the Clash.

WHENEVER I THINK of the Clash now, nearly 20 years after I first saw them, I see a particular urban landscape: the underside of the Westway, the elevated motorway which, when it was under construction, wiped out a whole part of west London. This was the area immortalized by the 1950 film *The Blue Lamp*, an infamous juvenile delinquency shocker that featured Dirk Bogarde as a cop-killer. This was also where Mick Jones lived—and the place celebrated in "London's Burning": "I can't think of a better way to spend the night/than speeding around underneath the yellow lights."

Underneath the Westway, all is harsh, drab, Sixties concrete. At the point where the upper and lower roads diverge stands one last stanchion—a huge concrete block holding up the motorway. Sometime during 1977, an unknown graffiti artist immortalized this natural advertising site with a huge, simple message: THE CLASH. When first sprayed, it marked the group's psychic boundary—this was their manor, this was how they saw their city. When it was finally painted over in the late Eighties, long after the group was gone, it coincided with the final disappearance of their London, a metropolis in violent transition.

Like so many other bands in 1976, the Clash started because of the Sex Pistols. Saturated in Sixties Mod Pop—the Kinks, the

Who—they developed a specific project: to reflect their environment and their culture. They were enmeshed in an impossible contradiction between pop success and the drive to failure that was at the heart of punk. Even more than the Sex Pistols, who had become unreachable as early as spring 1977, they embodied the possibilities of punk—its DIY ethic, stripped-down noise, deep sympathy for the underdog. They were rewarded with rabid fans who identified with the archetypal fucked-up teen sentiments expressed in "What's My Name": "What the hell is wrong with me? I'm not who I want to be."

Alone out of the first-generation Brit punk groups, the Clash integrated black music—in particular the reggae and dub that was omnipresent in mid-Seventies London—into what was all too often a white-on-white style. It was a breadth of vision that served them well when punk dissolved into acrimony during 1978.

The Clash were badly hurt—you can hear it on *Give 'Em Enough Rope*—but they survived and prospered. They slipped, to be sure, into bad habits, but acquired a hard-won maturity and a swing that was light-years from their early thrash days. The Clash became an internationally successful rock band—the only U.K. punk group to crack the U.S. charts—and they deserved to be. On mid-period records like *London Calling* and *Sandanista!* they slip effortlessly amongst dub, funk and rockabilly with no slackening of their primal fire.

For most people, the Clash ceased to exist after "Rock the Casbah" and "Combat Rock," their moment of maximum success. But despite guitarist and founder Mick Jones's departure, Joe Strummer and Paul Simonon carried the group on into a curious coda: the extraordinary mixture of hip hop and classic buzzsaw punk of *Cut the Crap* and its great single, "This Is England." Strummer had always been a mad ranter—just listen to him *go* on "Complete Control" and "Tommy Gun"—and here he ends the Clash where he began. As Greil Marcus wrote in *The Fascist Bathroom*, "In this moment, you could see Joe Strummer's whole future: on some dank London corner, the drunken bum calls out to passersby, 'Hey, you wanna hear "Rock the Casbah"? It was a hit, it was a hit in, ah, in . . .'"

Although I was obsessed with them during 1976 and 1977, I haven't listened to the Clash for a long time. Perhaps it's because they sum up an era all too well. Yet, picking up their records again, I'm forcibly struck by one thing: for every awkward experiment or missed opportunity, there's a song that rocks like a motherfucker. The proof of the Clash's greatness lies in their vigorous afterlife, their continuing influence on current U.S. bands like Rancid and Rage Against the Machine; their extraordinary success in 1991, when "Should I Stay or Should I Go" was used as the soundtrack to a Levi's commercial and went to Number One in the U.K. Despite—indeed because of—their failings, the Clash remain a classic rock band: deeply human, reflective of their times, totally committed to the big, brutal beat.

★ ★ ★

"I'VE BEEN TRYING to go out recently, but I've had to stay in. And the only thing I've got at home is a TV that hasn't got any sound on it. So I'm staying in, right, and just want to hear sounds. I don't want to see no visuals, I want to go out and see some groups. But there ain't anything to go out and see. I've seen it all before. So I have to stay at home and watch TV without sound and lip-read my way through it. I'd just like to protest about this state of affairs. So if there's any of you people in the audience who aren't past it yet, and if you can do anything, why don't you get up and do it, instead of, like, lying around?"

—Joe Strummer, stage rap for the Clash, September 5, 1976

JUST LIKE THE Sex Pistols, the Clash started in fashion and ended in passion. Both bands consisted of young musicians packaged, in classic Brit style, by manipulative, older managers—Malcolm McClaren and Bernard Rhodes. Fired by their knowledge of pop, an unfulfilled late Sixties radicalism and the explosion of New York's CBGB's scene, McClaren and Rhodes entered into a rivalry to assemble and patent *their* street rock group. The idea was to be loud, obnoxious and very London. The subsequent rivalry between the Sex Pistols and the Clash dominated both groups' careers—all the more so because the Clash were the only Brit group good enough to challenge the Sex Pistols' preeminence.

McClaren and Rhodes were colleagues before they were rivals, and if there is one beginning common to both groups, it lies in a T-shirt designed by both managers, in

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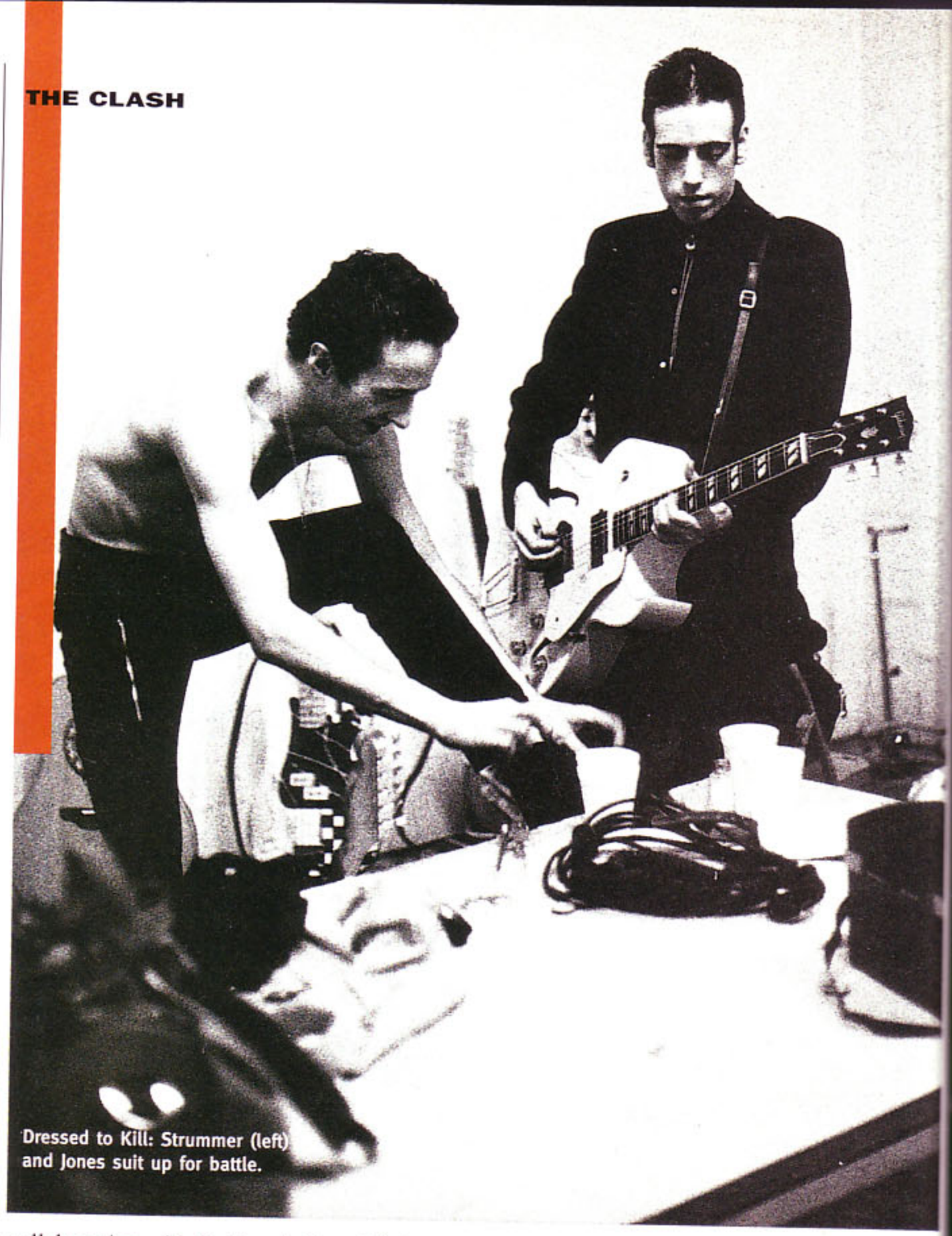


Dressed to Kill: Strummer (left) and Jones suit up for battle.

collaboration with fashion designer Vivienne Westwood, in late 1974. Entitled "You're gonna wake up one morning and *know* what side of the bed you've been lying on!" the shirt had two columns, designed at opposite sides of a square front: on one side, the "hates," on the other, the "loves": Jamaican Rude Boys, Gene Vincent, Eddie Cochran, Jimi Hendrix, Lenny Bruce, Iggy Pop. Unlike most manifestos, this one became reality as McLaren and Rhodes each packaged groups that enshrined the cultural/social divisions of the T-shirt.

Rhodes picked Mick Jones from a pool of inner London New York Dolls obsessives. With his Keith Richards looks, Jones was a natural, a rock star years before he actually became one. Jones and Rhodes picked up art student Paul Simonon because he looked the part—a beautiful, almost James Dean-like young man, who embodied (much more than Jones ever could) the tough-but-smart, streetwise presence that the times demanded. Behind his non-verbal façade and his initial lack of bass skills, Simonon brought street-smarts and a strong visual identity to the group through his look and his artwork; the famous hyper-realist Westway mural that adorned the Clash's famous rehearsal studio in London's Camden Town was a Simonon creation.

This willingness to reflect their environment dominated the Clash from the beginning. They felt a deep allegiance to North Kensington, the area that includes Notting Hill Gate, Portobello Road, and the poorer quarters north of the Westway, which cuts through the area like a knife. It was in these quarters—the dereliction of Notting Dale (pictured on the sleeve for the single "White Riot") and the massed squats of Elgin Avenue—that the Clash made their spiritual home. Here, they seemed to say in all their iconography and their lyrics, is where the real heart of the city lies.

Squatting (illegally occupying empty or deserted properties in derelict or forgotten areas) was a phenomenon at this time. It allowed poor young people access to the inner city and thus played a major part in the growth of U.K. punk. At least one member of every major group had squatted at one point. North Kensington was one of the biggest: "There was a real community," Joe Strummer told me in 1989. "We even had a Squatters' Union. You'd go in there, bang, change the locks. Possession

BACK CLASH

A blow by blow guide to the Clash on record

THE CLASH

(CBS, 1977; UK Version)

★★★★

Absolutely monumental. Nearly 20 years after its release, the Clash's debut remains a bracing call to arms, one of those rare albums with the power to change people's lives. The whole shebang—the pissed-off power of Joe Strummer's snarled vocals, the piercing perfection of Mick Jones's jagged-edged guitar, the undeniable hookiness of songs like "Hate and War," "London's Burning" and "Garageland"—sounds as amazing now as it did then. Anthemic, explosive, nasty and gnarly, *The Clash* is a pillar of pure punk energy and attitude. Sadly, American listeners never got to hear the album in its original form, but its sound and fury will endure.

GIVE 'EM ENOUGH ROPE

(Epic, 1978)

★★★★1/2

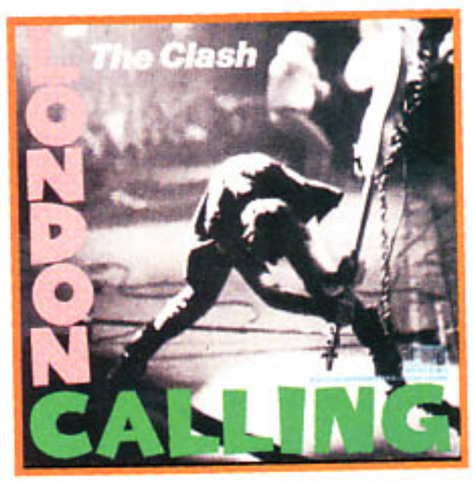
The Clash's first American release initially brought a lot of people up short. Produced by Sandy Pearlman (Blue Oyster Cult), the album sounds shockingly metallic at first. But after a spin or two, it becomes obvious these guys are onto something—arena punk, maybe? The sheer force of the playing and the excellent material make *Rope* an underacknowledged classic. Chock full of great songs, this is where to find Jones's touching ballad "Stay Free," the Who homage "Guns on the Roof" and the magnificent "Safe European Home," one of the hardest-rocking reflections on race and class ever recorded. Primo shit all the way.

THE CLASH

(Epic, 1979)

★★★★ 1/2

If not quite as seamless as its British counterpart, this is nonetheless an essential purchase. As a sop to those fans outraged by the deletion of key tracks from the original, this offers substitute goodies like "Clash City Rockers," "Jail Guitar Doors" and a powerhouse cover of the Bobby Fuller Four's "I Fought the Law." Buy it.



LONDON CALLING

(Epic, 1979)

★★★★1/2

The Clash's commercial breakthrough found the band streamlining its sound just enough to capture the ears and hearts of American youth. Produced by the late Guy Stevens (Mott the Hoople), this double album still holds up well. From the rockabilly rave-up "Brand New Cadillac" to the crushingly catchy "Clampdown," every song is memorable. Even if the overall effect is less intense than that of the band's earlier efforts, this is the best starting point for Clash neophytes.

SUPER BLACK MARKET CLASH

(Epic, 1980)

★★★★

An odds-and-sods collection originally issued as a 10-inch record, *Super Black Market* features a number of fine songs ("Capital Radio," "City of the Dead"), as well as some of the band's excursions into dub reggae ("Bankrobber," "Armagideon Time"). And check out that letter-perfect version of Booker T and the MGs' classic soul instrumental, "Time Is Tight"! Available on CD with added tracks.

SANDINISTA!

(Epic, 1980)

★★

A very mixed bag, to say the least, this wildly eclectic triple album actually once almost succeeded in turning a young Kurt Cobain off to punk rock. In three short years, the Clash had fallen victim to the very excesses it had once railed so convincingly against. The sprawling results of the band's indulgences were so turgid and distressing that many fans abandoned them outright after *Sandinista!*'s release. In all fairness, there are a few decent songs ("The Call Up," "Skin I'm In") as well as some occasionally successful experiments, such as the rap-flavored opener, "The Magnificent Seven." On the whole, however, *Sandinista!* is an overstuffed dud, the first blot on the legacy of a stellar band.

COMBAT ROCK

(Epic, 1982)

★★★

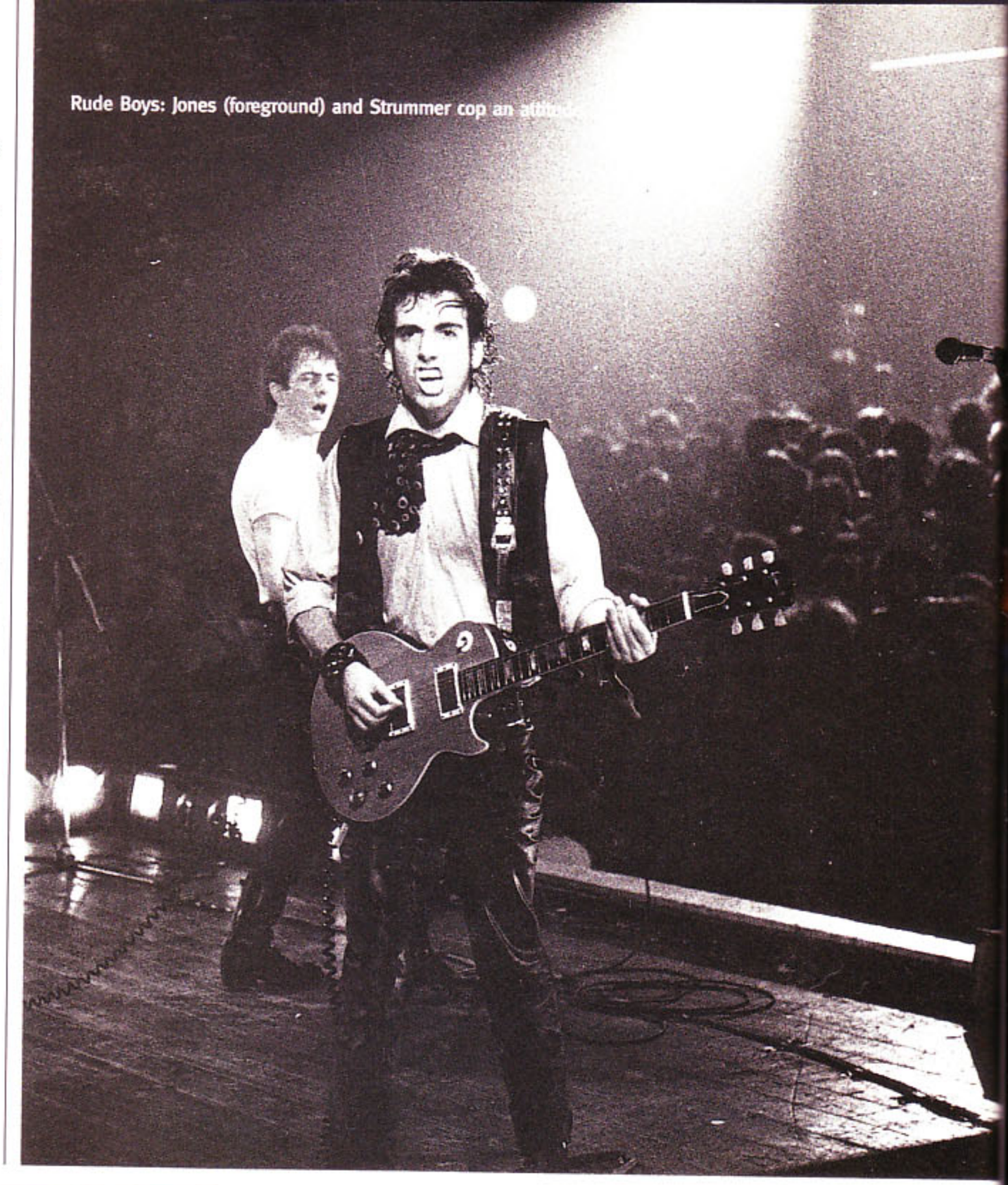
Not quite a return to form, but a decent effort that at least catapulted the Clash back into the middle of the road. The two hit singles—"Should I Stay or Should I Go?" and "Rock the Casbah"—were quite good, if a trifle pedestrian for a band that had

Continued on page 184

is nine-tenths of the law. We were very organized."

If Jones was the Clash's motivator, Joe Strummer was its heart. A middle-class renegade, he brought experience from his days as a frontman with the 101ers, a street R&B band. At that time, London was emerging from the "pub rock" boom (a bar band movement away from hippie excess back to R&B basics and good times) into a rawer, tougher version spearheaded by Dr. Feelgood's razor-sharp chords and villainous attitude; other groups included Ian Dury and the Blockheads and Eddie and the Hot Rods. In the spring of 1976, the 101ers looked poised to enter the pub rock pantheon, but, at an April 3 date in West London (also attended by Rhodes, Jones and Simonon), Joe Strummer had a visitation.

"The Sex Pistols were supporting us," Strummer says. "The rest of my group didn't think much of them, but I sat out in the audience. Lydon was really thin; he pulled out his snot rag and blew into it and went, 'If you hadn't guessed already, we're the Sex Pistols,' and they blasted into 'Substitute.' They did 'Steppin' Stone,' which we also did, but they were light years ahead of us. We played 'Route 66' to the drunks



Rude Boys: Jones (foreground) and Strummer cop an attitude

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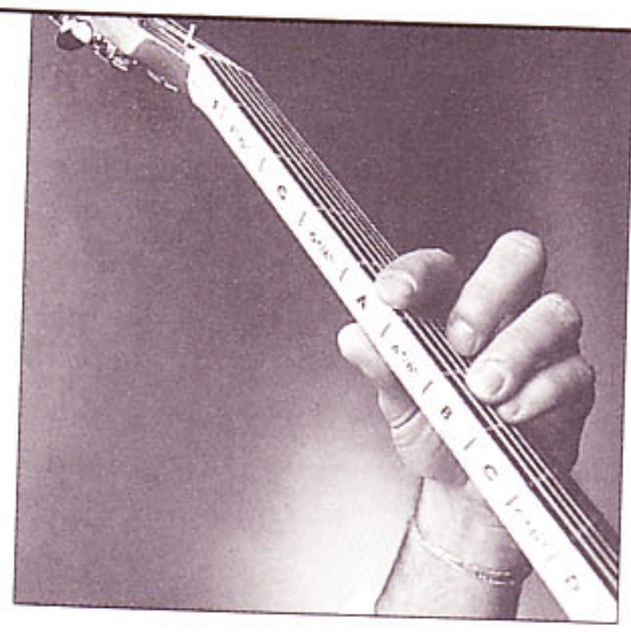

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at the bar, going, 'Please like us.' But here was this quartet going, 'We don't give a toss what you think, you pricks, this is what we like to play and this is the way we're gonna play it.' They were from another century; it took my head off. The audience was shocked. After that, I started going to see the Sex Pistols on Tuesday nights at the 100 Club; that's when Bernie Rhodes came up to me and said, 'Give me your number, I want to talk to you.' The 101ers had some dates supporting Kilburn and the High Roads, but I split the group up. They thought I was mad, but it was a case of jump to that side of the fence or you're on the other side. Remember that T-shirt that Malcolm and Bernie designed, 'Which side of the bed?' It was so clear."

Within three months, the Clash played its first live date in support of the Sex Pistols at the Black Swan, in Sheffield, on July 4, 1976. Like the Pistols, they were heavily constructed, a total package. First came the name and the attitude—provocation and confrontation, reflecting a society in the throes of violent change. Next came the clothes, necessity turned into virtue: lacking the ready-made fashion input that McLaren and Westwood's clothing shop gave, "Sex," to the Sex Pistols, they improvised a look out of thrift-store clothes. On top of the Sixties clothes then coming online—the stripped, minimal lines of the Mod look—they added layers of artfully dripped paint, Jackson Pollock-style, together with slogans derived from Rhodes's enduring fascination with the 1968 Paris student riots. On top of that, they added slogans of their own, taken from deep reggae tunes of the day: "Under heavy manners," "Heavy-duty discipline."

Initially a five-piece with Keith Levene, the future P.I.L. guitarist, the Clash sounded metallic, sharp, hyper-modern, a Seventies acceleration of the Kinks and the Who. Early slice-of-life songs like "Mark Me Absent" and "How Can I Understand the Flies" sound like reshufflings of "I Can't Explain" (a riff that the Clash could not get out of their heads, viz "Clash City Rockers"), except in one crucial detail. Taking their cues from dub reggae, they pioneered the white musicians' use of drop-out, a musical device whereby all the instrumentation and vocal falls away, leaving just the steady pulse of the bass or the clattering of drums. The Clash made drop-out their own, converting (thanks to drummer Terry Chimes) the sinuous snakiness of dub into a sheet-metal, violently propulsive drive.

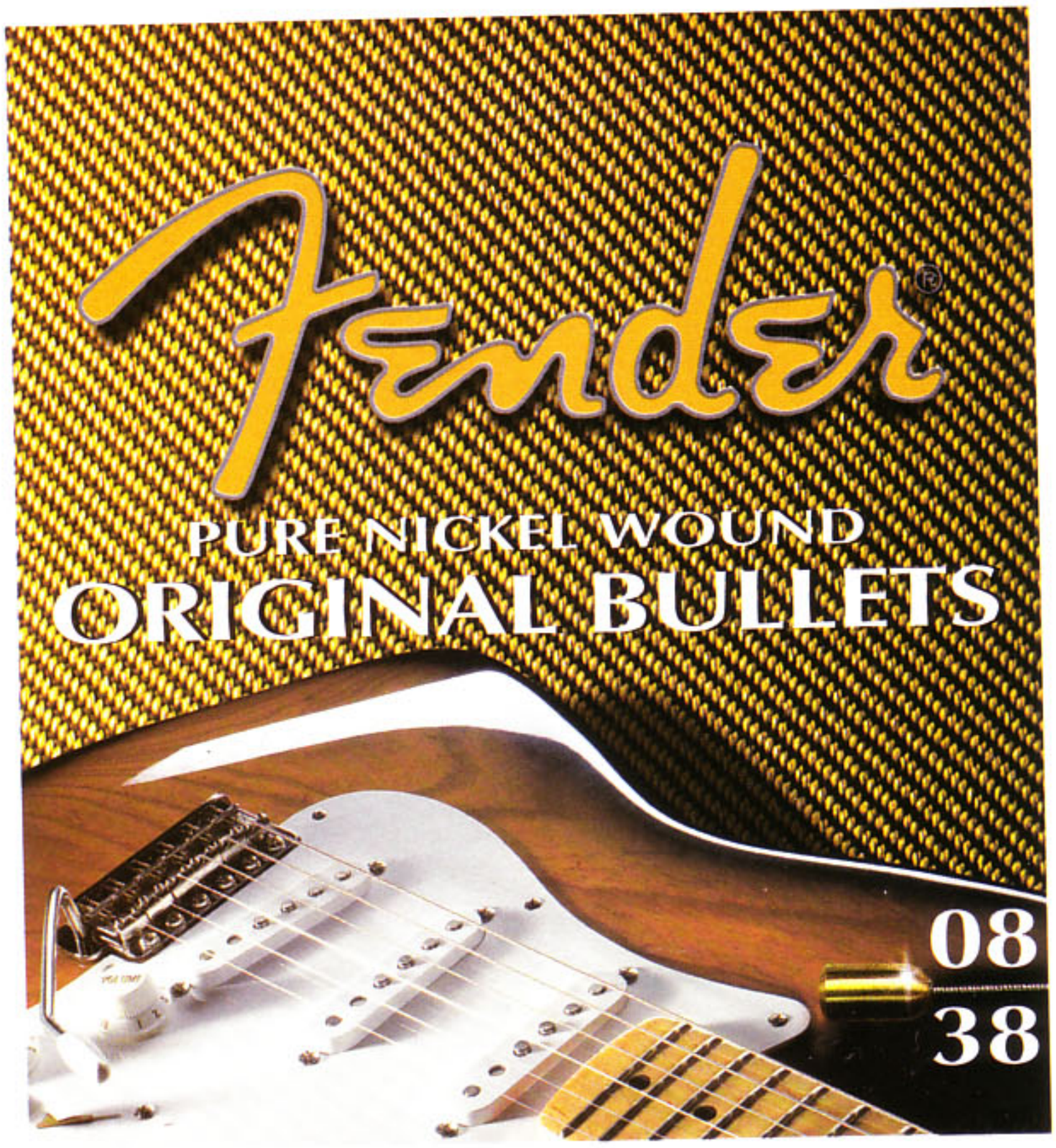
Levene's departure in September 1976 coincided with the band's assumption of a more coherent lyrical policy. If the Sex

Pistols were an all-out assault against contemporary perception, then the Clash were designed by Rhodes as more conventionally political—to the point of being social realist, if not actually sociological. New songs like "White Riot" were instant snapshots of current events, in this case the Notting Hill Gate Carnival Riot in August 1976, the worst racial disturbance in 20 years and a harbinger of increasing turmoil to come. A powerful call to arms, "White Riot" laid bare the hidden dynamic behind punk both then and now: as the Clash repeated the title phrase again and again, it sounded like nothing so much as the cry of the abused child.

This, punk's tortured innocence, was buried under carefully applied layers of environmental and political detail. Not only did the Clash write about terrorism and urban unrest, they also tackled the keynote of punk as it entered the media: the rise in unemployment, which would, during the next few months, top the previously unthinkable figure of one million. (In the Eighties, this figure would rise to well over three million, where it hovers today.) At the same time, they deliberately wrote about their 'hood, whether it be the 100 Club, the Westway or the concrete towers that surrounded North Kensington. In an echo of J. G. Ballard's 1975 classic novel, *High Rise,* their attitude was contradictory: high rises were both a symbol of inhumanity and curiously exciting—hypermodern, clean, monolithic. As pictured on the cover of their first album, the Clash, beneath it all, were classic Mods.

This was most obvious in their drug of choice, amphetamine sulphate, which directly affected their music. For their first 18 months or so, the Clash were a total white-line blur. Unlike the Sex Pistols, who retained a sense of tension and relaxation, the Clash were a thrash band who would hit the stage speeding and stay at that pitch until they left in sudden silence. I saw them twice in the late autumn of 1976, and they were totally devastating: stripped, manic, very London, with a startling three-man front line. The second time I saw them, Joe Strummer put his guitar down at the end of the set and leaped offstage to trade blows with hostile hippies. I'd never seen anything like it: the clash between the old and new dramatized right in front of my eyes.

The Clash were the hottest thing in town then; it became obvious very quickly that they were the only group who could, and would, challenge the Sex Pistols. As their friend and road manager Roadent told me in 1989, "The Clash were the first band to steal fans from the Sex Pistols; they were the construction to the Sex Pistols'



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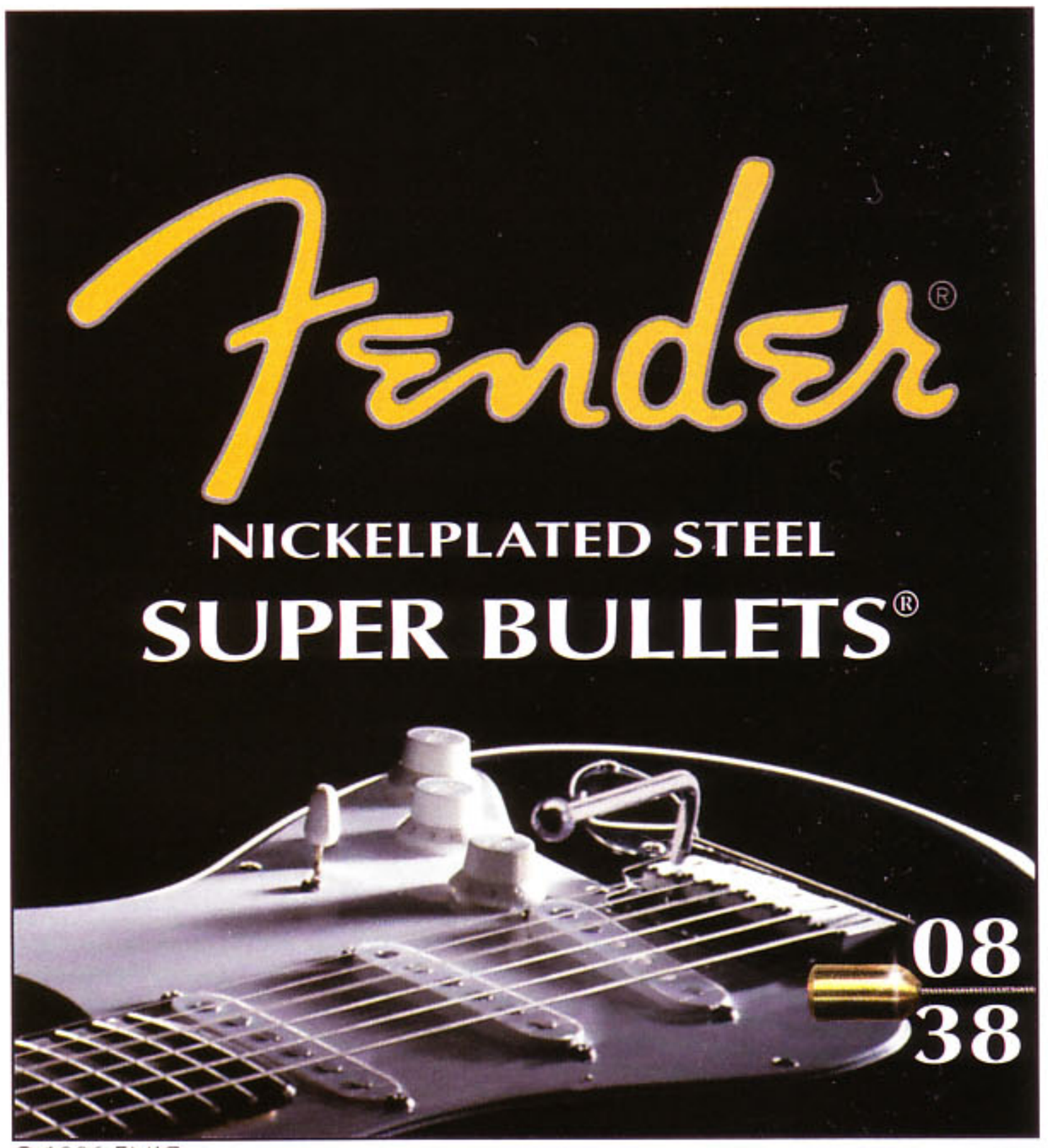
nihilism." The Clash had a *program*—a jumbled (as all pop programs must be) mix of "small is beautiful," do-it-yourself culture, situationist slogans and rallying calls to the culturally dispossessed. As the Pistols became enmired in notoriety, the Clash overtook them as the people's punk band. Signing to CBS worldwide in February 1977 was an index of their ambition—contrary to the dictates of "do-it-yourself" punk ideologues—to reach the widest audience possible.

Danger stranger
You better paint your face
No Elvis Beatles or Rolling
Stones in 1977
"1977"—*The Clash*

1977 WAS APOCALYPTIC, a year of international terrorism and incessant violence in the U.K. With their songs and their very name—an echo of Culture's 1977 reggae hit, "Two Sevens Clash"—the Clash existed to embody the time. Released in April 1977, their first album defined Brit Punk. In its original version (still unavailable on CD), it contained 14 funny, violent, anthemic songs that wore their artifice close to the chest (just listen to the phasing on "Cheat"), buried under the football-terrace harmonies. Even here, you can hear the struggle between Strummer and Jones that would ultimately destroy the group; between Strummer's puritan concentration on authenticity, *the feeling,* and Jones's panoply of classic power pop mannerisms—part Who, part Mick Ronson, part Johnny Thunders, part Stones, part Mott the Hoople. But in 1977, the Clash had become standard-bearers in the punk wars. With the Sex Pistols becalmed, they became the leaders of the pack.

Structured around Strummer's voice and stage presence and Jones's guitar (although strapped on and plugged in, Strummer would be too active to play through a large part of the set, so Jones had to cover everything), the Clash rose to the challenge. Building on the unexpected success of their first album, they released two terrific Top 40 hit singles, "White Riot" and "Complete Control," and had two sold-out tours of the U.K. during the year. I attended both—at the Finsbury Park Rainbow, in May, and the Manchester Apollo, in November—and they were extraordinary. The group blasted it out to thousands of out-of-control kids, who proceeded to trash each theater. They remain two of the best rock shows I've ever seen, with great support groups (Richard Hell and the Voidoids, Subway Sect, the Buzzcocks) and an identification between audience and performer so close that it hurt.



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The Clash looked like world-beaters at the end of 1977, but things started to go wrong. When the Sex Pistols split in January 1978, the Clash were placed in an impossible position: de facto leaders of a culture that had just had its heart ripped out. Just as their perfect, paint-spattered DIY look had been replaced by carefully styled, militaristic costumes, their material ("Clash City Rockers," "Guns on the Roof") became more self-referential. Surrounding themselves with an almost all-male entourage, they suddenly seemed like an updated version of the decadent Sixties rockers they had formerly despised—full of pointless machismo, drug abuse and self-aggrandizing mythology. Worse, punk's chain reaction had made things move so fast that they suddenly seemed old, out of date, reactionary, *traitors*.

This comedown from amphetamine lift-off was tough stuff—and you can hear the reaction all over *Give 'Em Enough Rope*: "The sport of today is exciting/The in-crowd are into in-fighting." This whining tends to obscure the record's real virtues—that it laid the foundation for the Clash's future. If 1977's *The Clash* was a perfect encapsulation of a moment, it was also underproduced, a pale shadow of the group's awe-inspiring live sound. Their inexperience in the studio was most obvious in the underwhelming guitar sound, mainly carried by Mick Jones. In comparison, *Give 'Em Enough Rope* is a quantum leap. The rhythm section (a newly confident Paul Simonon and Chimes's replacement, the more flexible Topper Headon) packs a real wallop, while the Strummer/Jones duo finally gets a wall of sound worthy of the name on "Safe European Home," "Tommy Gun" and "English Civil War."

In the promo copies for *Give 'Em Enough Rope*, the group inserted a "Clash Atlas" poster of world oppression, violence and terrorism. Self-aggrandizing perhaps, but also an index of their ambition. Just as the era of social strife that they had helped dramatize came to an end—their version of "I Fought the Law" was released days after Margaret Thatcher was elected Prime Minister, in what can now be seen as a right-wing coup—the Clash were off on what would be a four-year round of constant travel, which included several tours of the U.S., Australia and the Far East. Their music reflected this, as they moved away from the post-punk culture that was rejecting them into a rock classicism that could adapt past and present forms into an entirely convincing future.

Continued on page 186

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Iron Man

Pete Townshend, now in his fourth decade as a rock giant, remembers every blessed and brutal moment of a spectacular career.

by Alan di Perna

"OKAY, SO TONIGHT we've established my gender, my marital status and the fact that you lot have been drinking far more than I have. . ."

With these words, Pete Townshend bids good night to a sea of jubilant faces inside L.A.'s House of Blues. Lyrically speaking, it's been another evening of sex, drugs and rock and roll, Townshend-style. On his own or with the Who, Pete's gigs have always been equal parts entertainment and psychotherapy. The only question is whether they're more therapeutic for Townshend or his audience. On this particular night, backed only by keyboardist Jon Carin, the tall, gaunt, once-again-sober rock legend has taken his listeners on an amazing journey, from the early Who gems "I'm a Boy" and "A Legal Matter" to grown-up songs of marital strife, alcoholism and grappling with God—"Slit Skirts," "Let My Love Open the Door," "Rough Boys" and even the relatively obscure "Parvardigar," from *Who Came First* (Atlantic), Townshend's very first solo album in 1972.

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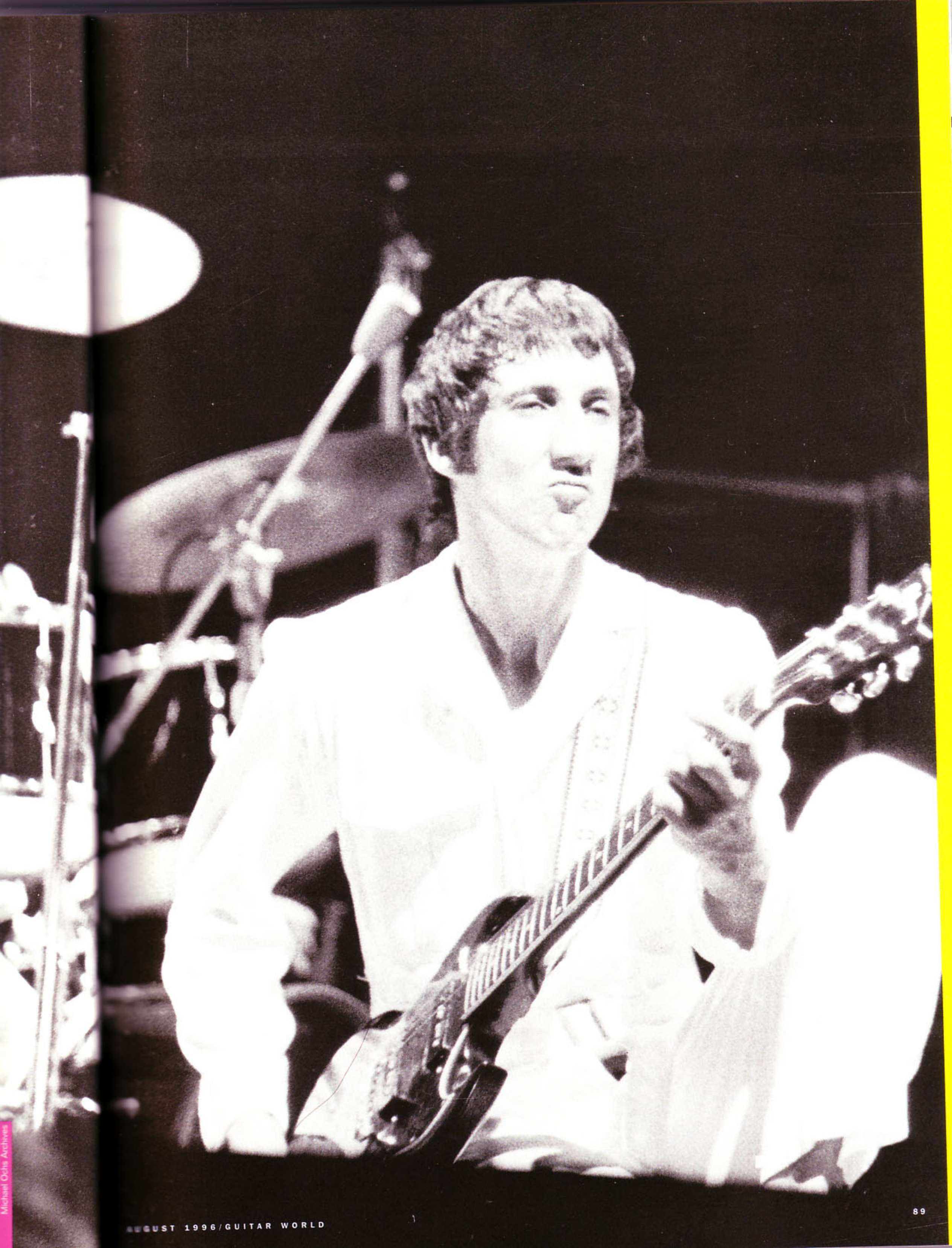

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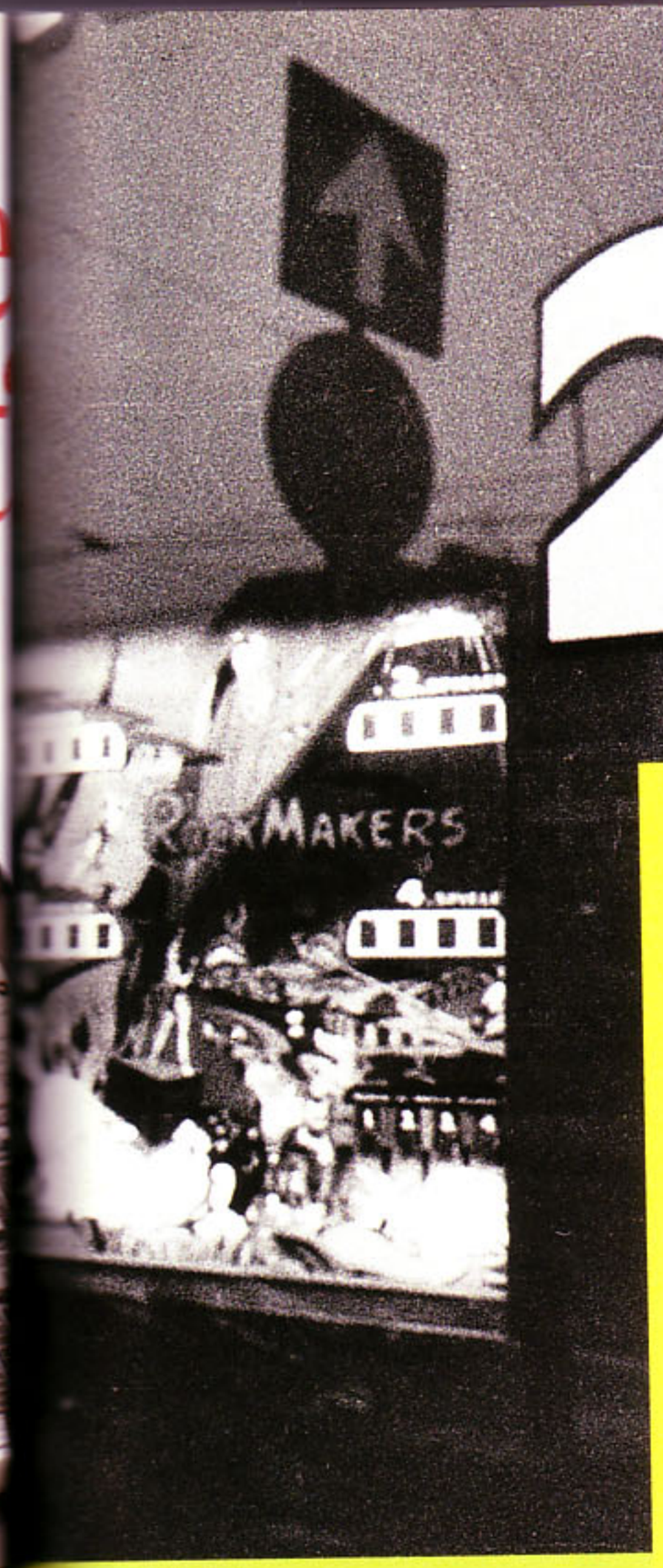
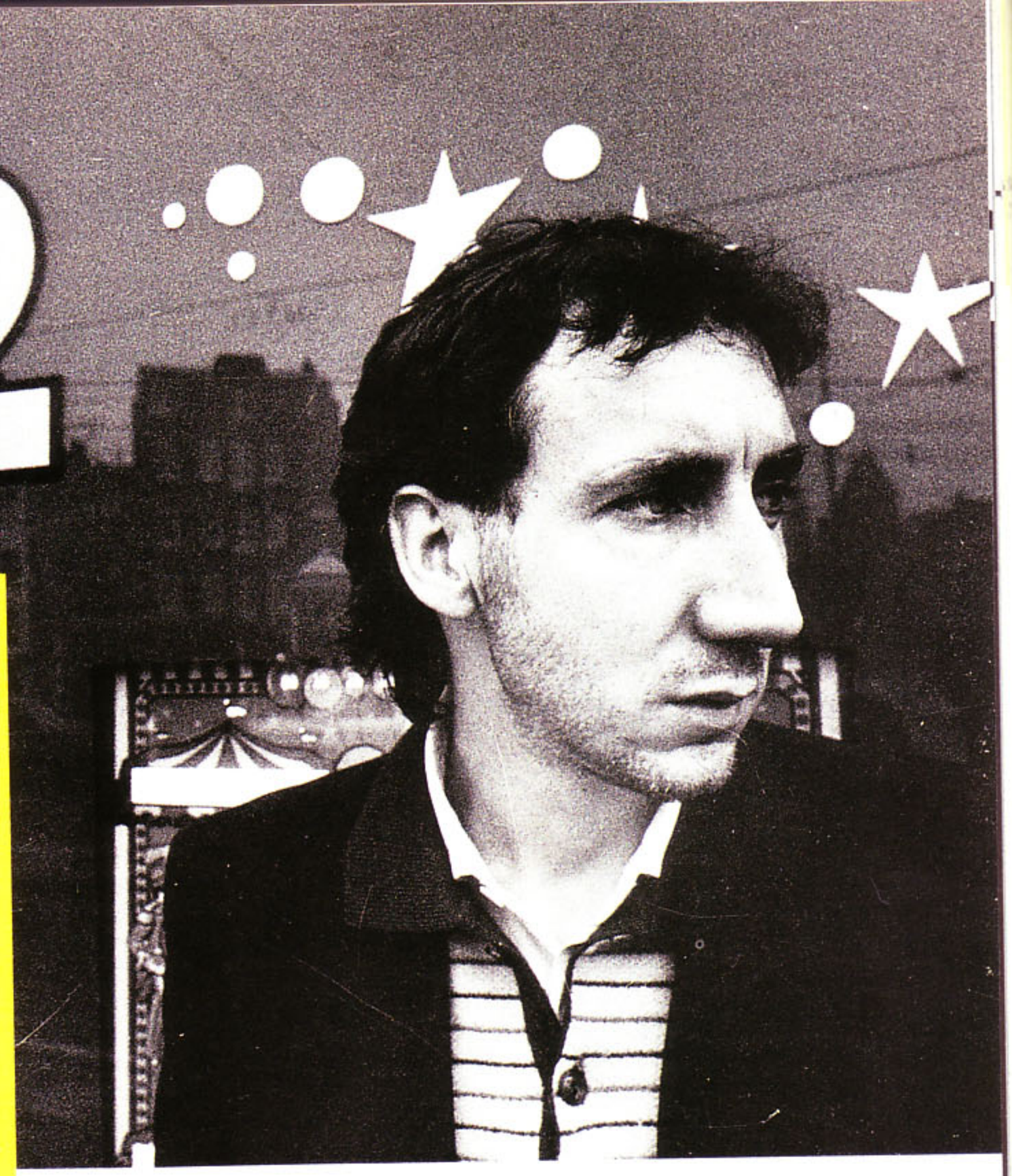


PINBALL WIZARD:
Townshend stands like a statue, c.1980.

This summer promises to be a great time for Who fans and Pete-o-philes of every stripe. The stage production of the rock opera *Tommy* (MCA, 1969) is now on the road in America, and another production has recently opened in London. The *Tommy* CD-ROM has hit the streets, and Atlantic has released *The Best of Pete Townshend,* a well-paced selection of Pete's biggest solo tracks. The disc helps establish that even if all traces of the Who were tragically lost to posterity, Pete Townshend would still have a secure position as one of the best songwriters of the rock era.

Fortunately, though, the Who's legacy is very much alive today. By the time these words appear in print, Townshend, Roger Daltrey and John Entwistle will have climbed on-stage together for a momentous Who reunion gig at London's Hyde Park, sharing the bill with Eric Clapton and playing *Quadrophenia* (MCA, 1973) in its entirety. One of the Who's most popular albums, *Quadrophenia* has always presented problems for the group in live performance. Now Townshend's ready to take another crack at it. He's also hatching

"When you pick up a modern, fine-tuned electric guitar and put it through a batch of modern electronics, you can make it fucking do *anything*."



plans to launch a full-blown stage production of *Quadrophenia*, very much as he did with *Tommy*. At one point in his L.A. show—some two months before Hyde Park—Pete gave an emotional performance of *Quadrophenia*'s "Why Should I Care" at the grand piano. Bringing the song to an appropriately theatrical conclusion, he turned to the audience and said, "See, it *will* work!"

Pete Townshend has always been unusually willing to share his innermost feelings, doubts, insecurities and thought processes with his audience. In this regard, he's perhaps the most unguarded, "emotionally naked" member of the classic rock community. He has also consistently pushed the boundaries of what can be done with a rock performance. In his youth, he used an electric guitar, mountains of amps and unprecedented amounts of volume, violence and vitriol to push those limits. In later years, he's used everything from computer electronics to traditional theater techniques to give life to his larger-than-rock ideas. The results have been intriguing, challenging, occasionally puzzling but always adventurous. Much like a conversation with the man himself.

GUITAR WORLD: Did the idea for the Hyde Park gig grow out of a desire on your part to mount a stage production of *Quadrophenia*?

PETE TOWNSHEND: Yes. But it also grew out of a need to find some elegant way to reopen my relationship with Roger Daltrey. The two are of equal importance; I couldn't possibly do *Quadrophenia* in the park without Roger. So when I agreed to do the show, I was telling myself, "Hey, you're going to have to ring up Roger *on your knees!* And accept any conditions he imposes on you." Which was something I gladly did. Now I can say to a journalist, "It was fucking difficult. He just didn't want to do it." *[Daltrey has often complained to the press of Townshend's unwillingness to play live with the Who.—Ed.]* And it *was* difficult to get him to do it. He has lots of complicated issues regarding the Who at the moment.

But for us, this is the beginning, hopefully, of a creative, collaborative partnership, which is something very different from anything we've ever had before. When I was younger, I simply wasn't able to have

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that kind of collaborative partnership with someone to whom I was that close. Within the Who, Roger was the only normal soul, living his life in the middle of a bunch of very complicated, substance-dependent individuals. He has his own addictions, but unfortunately, he can't talk about them in public. And they have nothing to do with sheep! So, for the both of us, preparing to do *Quadrophenia* in the park has been a period of readjustment. That's what's exciting about it. We're sitting with pieces of paper in front of us and discussing a script. We never did that with songs. In the Who, I'd just take a bunch of songs in to Roger and play them for him and he'd say, "This is really great, but I can't do this one, that one or that one." I'd put the rejected ones aside and later think, "What's wrong with that one? Why *can't* he do this one?" But that wasn't something we discussed. It wasn't a collaboration—it was the editing process of a diva. So now I'm looking forward to having a real collaboration with Roger. It's a scary prospect, but I think a healthy one.

Originally, though, my motivation for doing *Quadrophenia* in the park was exactly as you said. I thought, "Here's an opportunity. Master Card will put up the money. It will be a big audience, an appropriate time, a celebrity concert . . ." You know that what got *Tommy* on the stage was doing a series of celebrity concerts for charity. So I thought if I just copycatted that with *Quadrophenia*, it might have the same effect. As it is, it's turning into something very different and taking on a life of its own.

GW: As *Tommy* is reincarnated in various forms, does its meaning change for you? Do you discover new themes in it?

TOWNSHEND: Yes, I've made some discoveries. For me, songwriting is very much an unconscious process. It's only from a distance of a great many years that I can look back and say, "Oh, *that's* what I was writing about." You have to understand that I didn't set out to be a songwriter. I set out to be more of an "idea man" in a band. I wanted to sit somewhere way off to the back—kind of like Brian Eno with Roxy Music—and give the band my great ideas, like, "You just need to wear a target t-shirt, man, and you'll be happening."

But increasingly I found that songwriting was becoming very therapeutic for me. That's definitely what happened to me with *Tommy*. Since writing *Tommy*, I've done a bit of actual therapy, and remembered things that I hadn't remembered at the time I wrote *Tommy*. I'm not saying that I find instances of an Uncle Ernie—of actual child abuse—in my life. [*Uncle Ernie was the child molesting character in the rock opera.*] But there were instances like friends of my father coming back from the pub a bit too drunk and playing a bit too rough.

And I found a few other things in that. In my first rock opera [A Quick One While He's Away *(1966)*] I could never figure out where this man Ivor the Engine Driver comes from. [*Sings in a heavy Northern English accent*] "My name is Ivor, I'm an engine driver. . ." He's a dirty old bugger, basically. He's the one who has an affair with the girl while the hero of the story is away in Australia, or wherever he is, and then he comes home and forgives the girl. So that opera's about two things: You can't trust old men. And you can't trust women, 'cause they'll have sex with old men when you're away, but when you come back you'll have to forgive them. That was the moral of the story. And I was thinking, "God, this is a misogynist, ageist piece." But that's what I was! I was a misogynist, ageist little git, basically.

But anyway, I was talking to my mother about it and she said, "You know, you used to travel by train down to your grandmother's all the time, in the care of the guard." We used to have this system in the U.K. where you could put a child in the care of the railway man. And I absolutely used to love it. You could walk up and down the train with the guard, or you might be in the back somewhere with the dogs and the Royal Mail. You felt part of the whole industry of the railway. But you know, I was somewhere between four and 11 years old and anything could have happened. I don't remember that anything did.

But at some point in my life, my benign trust of men in uniform changed into an absolute distrust of men in uniform. I think that's perfectly healthy, by the way. But it's interesting when you look back at your early work thinking maybe the lyrics will tell you things. That has been happening to me a lot, recently. No great revelations, but interesting.

GW: The compositional and conceptual dimensions of *Tommy* tend to overshadow the guitar work. But what kind of stuff *were* you playing on that album?

TOWNSHEND: I was playing a fair bit of piano in the composition. It was the first time that I'd really started to be confident that I could play the piano. But I was also working with the 12-string [acoustic] guitar as a free composition element. So on stuff like "Sparks" and "Underture," I used a big Harmony 12-string, Leadbelly-type guitar, sort of a copy of an old Stella. And I'd been tuning it down, probably to C, and getting into a kind of pick-driven ragtime. For example, I might play a drone on a D [*sings a rhythmic quarter note pattern*] and

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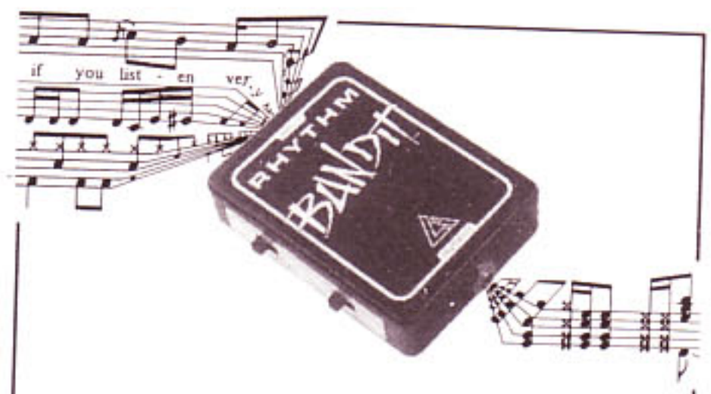

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play chords on the top. I used that to some extent on "Welcome," as well—'Come to this house, be one of the comfortable people . . .'—which is quite an interesting song. It was entirely written in free time. It's in 6/8, but there's no strict rhythm, just a gentle, "homey" kind of style that was produced on the guitar rather than in my head. It came from the feeling that I got from playing the guitar, from approaching the guitar as a comfortable, domestic kind of instrument.

But in the opening of the play [*"Overture"*], you hear what, in a sense, is very much a personal style of pick-driven acoustic guitar playing that not many other people do. I don't know what it grew out of—I think it was through a mixture of listening to blues and jazz, particularly to Mingus, at the same time. [*Pete sings a dotted 16th note pattern on a single tone.*] That two-finger thing that Mingus used to do on the piano all the time [*i.e., two fingers playing alternately on the same piano key*]. It's there in the "Captain Walker didn't come home" bit, with a little bit of country stuff thrown in. I still love to play that way today.

GW: Did your solo career liberate you, in a sense, from the guitar-hero role that was part of your identity with the Who?

TOWNSHEND: Yeah, it did, I think. That's a role I've never been entirely comfortable with. I don't want guitar players reading this to think that I'm whining about this, 'cause I'm not.

I really love the guitar. I think it's one of the great instruments of the last two or three hundred years. It's so expressive, particularly in its electric form. When you pick up an acoustic guitar—which is supposed to be the great new instrument of the modern, "unplugged" fucking age—you realize what a crude, horrid box it is. It doesn't sing. It's a fantastic rhythmic instrument; it's a fantastic accompaniment to the human voice. But when you pick up a modern, fine-tuned custom electric guitar and put it through a batch of modern electronics, you can make it fucking do *anything*.

I really love the way the guitar is a product of the technological age, which has produced a finer and finer voice. And I like the players who exploit that, whose lineage extends back to jazz as much as to blues.

But for me, the moment of separation [from the guitar] was working with Jimi Hendrix. And when I say working with Jimi Hendrix, I mean it: I worked *with* Jimi Hendrix. The Who used to do concerts alongside his band in the very early days. And I had to make the decision then: Was I seriously going to learn to play or just keep doing what I was doing? And I decided that I couldn't possibly learn to play. I rather foolishly got involved in comparing myself to Jimi, 'cause it seemed to me at the time that I was the only competition he had. Possibly me and Eric Clapton. There was kind of a conceit—a vanity—in that. I could only see me and Jimi; there wasn't anybody else.

And I remember having a conversation with Eric at the time, where it became apparent that he could only see *him* and Jimi. I confessed to Eric that, fucking hell, when I first saw Jimi play, I wanted to go and kill myself. And he said, "Well, I did too. But I didn't think that would've affected you. I mean, he wasn't in your arena." But he was. Jimi was someone who was working with showmanship, which was one of the directions where rock and roll was inevitably going at the time. Whether this was a good or bad thing is another matter. But rock and roll was inevitably going to get bigger, and Jimi was one of the people who showed that there was something you could do in the curve of an arm or the movement of the tongue, the stance of the body or a hairdo, where you combined showmanship and stagecraft. It was the beginning of a great genius that, unfortunately, had nowhere to go. But at that time, I decided to concentrate on *not* being a guitar hero. I'd already established a whole *modus operandi* and stylistic stage stuff. I never felt very comfortable with it, though.

GW: You were working with feedback and destroying guitars on stage several years before Hendrix. Did you feel ripped off when you first saw him?

TOWNSHEND: At first I did, yeah. But it was interesting. There was a lot of justice in it, wasn't there? I did feel slightly ripped off. Only briefly, though.

GW: When was the first time you saw Hendrix?

TOWNSHEND: I saw him in London, in a club behind Piccadilly. I can't remember the name; I think it was called 21. Then I saw him at Blazes, which is another club in Soho. And on that occasion, everybody was there. Mick Jagger and Paul McCartney were there. I was with Eric . . . again! We used to go around together back then, hanging on to each other like children. And I remember that concert being absolutely extraordinary. The first time I met Jimi, the Who were recording in I.B.C. studio. We could well have been recording *Tommy*—I can't remember what we were up to. But we were in the studio and [Hendrix manager] Chas Chandler brought him in to meet me. Jimi was covered from head to foot in dust. He looked like he just come out of what we call a "skip" in England—a place where you put builders' rubbish. He was very, very scruffy and his military jacket had obviously seen better days. His skin was bad. He

was very pale, extremely nervous and shy. He couldn't speak—didn't speak. I just put my hand out and said, "I've heard a lot about you." 'Cause he'd been signed to our label [*Track Records, in England*]. And Chas said, "Jimi wants to know what kind of rig to buy." And I said, "Well, you catch me at a strange time, 'cause I'm just shifting from Marshall to Sound City, and at the moment I'm using both." Chas said, "Well, that's what we'll do."

A couple of days later we appeared with them at the Saville Theater, which was owned by Brian Epstein, the Beatles' manager. I believe the Who and the Jimi Hendrix Experience were the first rock concert to play there. Jimi opened for us, and he had exactly the same rig as me. I actually felt like I'd given too much away—it was a bit like giving your enemy your weapons. Because to me, those were weapons. I felt I was very much on the leading edge of weapon building, and the guitar was my machine gun. It was always me who went to people like Jim Marshall and Dave Hill—who started Sound City, which became Hiwatt amps—and pushed them to make bigger, better and cleaner-distorting big amplifiers. And I handed all that to Jimi.

I've never really recovered from that. 'Cause what I *didn't* do was practice. What I should have done was look at Jimi and think, "Here is a teacher. Here is somebody I can learn from." I should've looked at his sources, his background, looked at the music he'd grown up with and studied what he'd played. Some of it was because he played upside down. He played both ways. He played a normal left-handed guitar with the strings reversed. But he also had a thing where he could play a normal guitar upside down, left handed—in other words, with the high strings on the top. I once gave him a guitar—it may have been at the Saville. He had a problem with his guitar and I gave him mine, and then I thought, "Well, it's strung the wrong way for him." But he could play it. When he first came to Britain, he was definitely playing with the little string at the top. He used to take a normal guitar and flip it around and play it.

GW: Lets get back to your music. Your solo work deals with many of the same themes you dealt with in the Who, but from a far more personal perspective.

TOWNSHEND: I certainly hope so. The Who material was very much written for the Who. "I Can't Explain" has high falsetto harmonies like the Beach Boys because Keith Moon was an absolute surf music fanatic and wouldn't play the song if it didn't have those harmonies. On the other hand, there was a need to deal with very serious issues of my own that were developing out on the street—the violent side of the Mod scene, which was really where Roger was at at the time. To some extent, really, he still is. But that's another conversation. So there was all that on the one hand, and all these pinkie voices across the top. In my early writing for the Who, I spent a lot of time attempting to satisfy the needs of the members of the band. And also, more bizarrely, to satisfy the needs of the person that I became when I was onstage with a guitar. Onstage, I became a completely different person from the one who sat in his room writing songs. Something I wanted to sing about all alone in my room might seem like complete crap to that person up on stage with his guitar.

But always the most important thing was to write for the audience. That runs all the way through my work, hopefully. I tell myself that. I hope it's true. I hope I tend to the emotional needs of the audience that I've carried with me throughout the Who and into my solo career. I feel that, as a solo artist, I was given permission to speak about myself. It wasn't self-indulgence. People said to me, "I like when you do that. I like when you talk about your inner fears,

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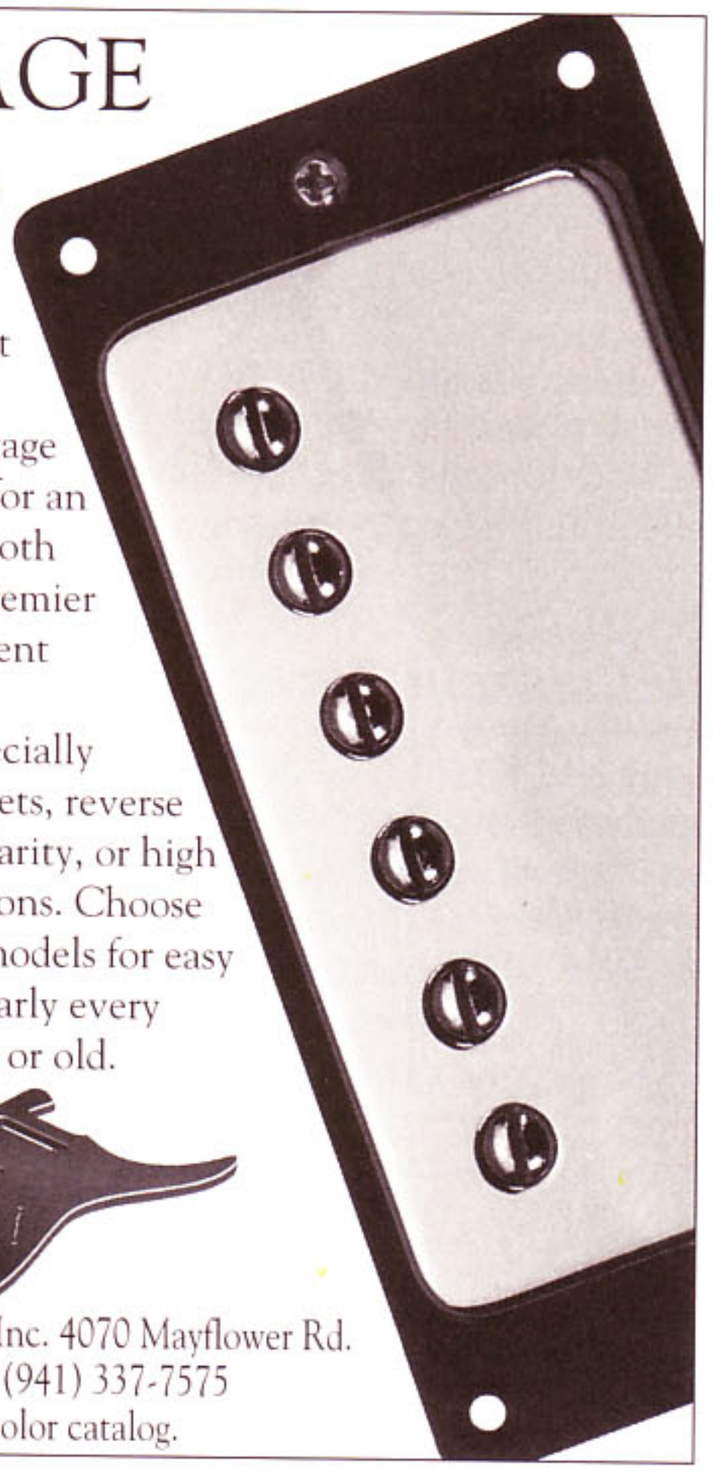

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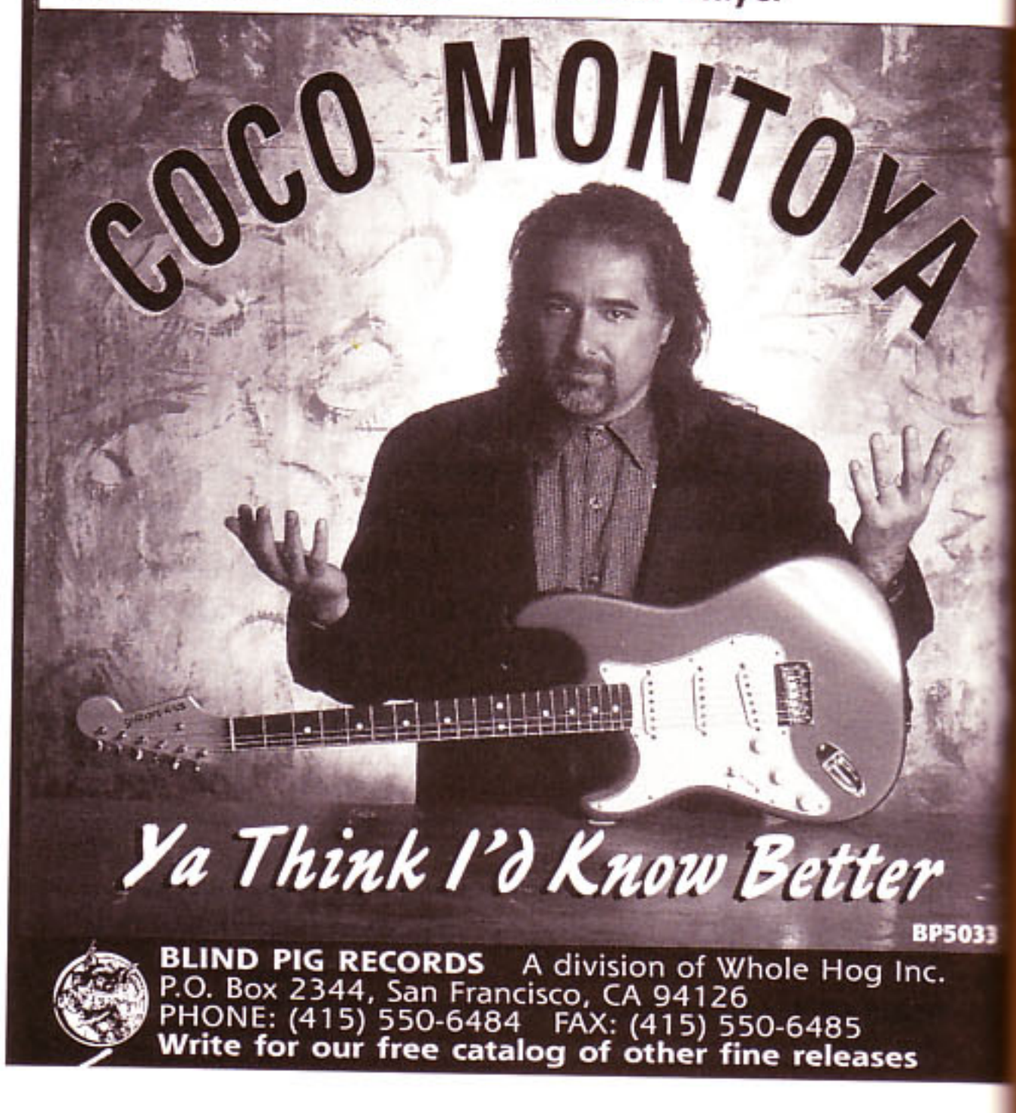

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because I can't do that. You say things that I identify with and it makes me feel good that someone who has, in a sense, a protected kind of life still suffers from the same human frailties that I do." Particularly in the department of gender identity, sexual identity, failure in relationships . . . everything but politics, in my case!

GW: Even in your earliest writing for the Who, there are things like "I'm a Boy," which is one of the best songs about gender identity ever written.

TOWNSHEND: Yeah. I'm gonna do that one in my shows. It's a good song. It gets better too, 'cause it's such a straightforward song about gender. And ultimately it suggests something about where gender might lead you. I don't think any of us in the Who realized quite what we were doing in 1967, wearing eye makeup on *Top of the Pops*. I didn't really connect with the fact that a lot of the violent, punky kind of stuff that the Who drew out of the Mod movement denied, to a great extent, that there was a strong feminine, "peacock" expression running through it. The idea that boys cared about fashion at all. That's something that really didn't exist prior to Mod. Earlier on, you had the sense that Elvis Presley just put on a leather jacket quite by accident. He just happened to pick it up. He didn't spend an hour in front of a mirror posing to make sure it was the right cut—presumably.

GW: It's interesting to compare "I'm a Boy" with "Rough Boys," one of the pivotal songs of your solo career and the lead-off track on *The Best of Pete Townshend.*

TOWNSHEND: What happened there is I was looking at my own physicality, my own sexuality. But, as I said earlier, it was all in a very unconscious way. I'd grown up surrounded by a very cosmopolitan and fairly wild bunch of people: Kit Lambert and Chris Stamp, Chris's brother [film actor] Terrance [Stamp], and [model] Jean Shrimpton. These were some of the hot shot gliteratti of London's King's Road scene in the Sixties. I'd been involved with that on the one hand, and with the Mods on the other—violent, tough street kids. There was all that in my past. And at the time of writing "Rough Boys," I was also was feeling threatened—although I couldn't figure out why—by what had been going on with punk. And that brought forth a whole tumbling array of ideas.

I still use that technique when I write songs—brainstorming onto the page and trying to make sense of it later. But at those times, I wasn't even trying to make sense of it. I was just brainstorming, period, and letting it appear on record. That was something that worked on that album. [*"Rough Boys" originally appeared on 1980's* Empty Glass (Atlantic).] So I continued with it. On a song like "Slit Skirts," from *All the Best Cowboys Have Chinese Eyes* [*Atlantic, 1982*], I brainstormed right on the page and it was all personal grief, self-loathing, self-pity, a feeling of failure in marriage . . . A lot of people were put off by it, like, "We don't want to listen to *that*." But others came up and told me how deeply they were touched by that song.

GW: What kind of role did you have in putting together the *Tommy* CD-ROM?

TOWNSHEND: In the beginning, quite a big role. But it went through a couple of phases where the direction of it changed. It's become a documentary, in a way—an archive of views, information and history that apply to where *Tommy* is today. And it's a good piece. Been a long time coming. It's nice to see it.

GW: The last time we spoke, in the summer of '94, you said you were thinking about doing a CD ROM of *Lifehouse*. [Lifehouse *was an ambitious, multi-faceted film project of Townshend's that was never completed but was the source for many of the songs on* Who's Next *(MCA, 1971). —Ed.*]

TOWNSHEND: Yeah, I probably was. I think

Continued on page 192

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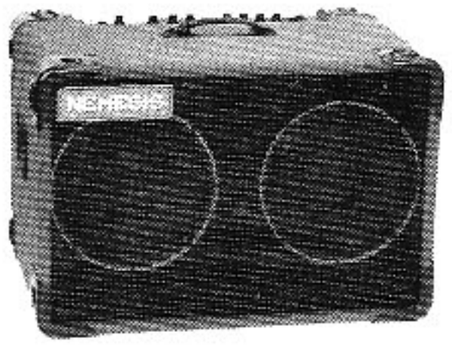

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She is one of the best blues slide guitarists in the world. But who does Bonnie Raitt listen

SLiDERS

THE WHOLE WORLD loves Bonnie Raitt, queen of the bottleneck guitar. Roy Rogers is a bottleneck guitarist whom Bonnie Raitt loves wholeheartedly.

"His playing knocks me out—it's as simple as that," says Raitt. "Roy is one of the most authentic interpreters of modern blues. He's a real master—a man who has spent so much time getting in touch with and really honing in on his craft. He's not an ivory-tower kind of player; he has a real understanding of a lot of different blues idioms."

Rogers, who was named after the cowboy star, has worked and recorded with a constellation of folk, blues and rock stars, including Keith Richards, Albert Collins, John Lee Hooker (he played in his touring band) and Bonnie Raitt. He is also a notable producer, known for his work on the last four Hooker albums. But the renaissance bluesman is best known for the magic he creates with the bottleneck.

And so it is that Raitt—who's been on a bit of a hiatus since the release last fall of her live album, *Road Tested* (Capitol, 1995)—took time to sit down with Rogers and talk about his new album, *Rhythm & Groove (*. Of course, when these two get together, there's always the risk of them coming up with nothing more than hours of Hooker stories. But when they convened on St. Patrick's Day—dubbed the Slides of March by the duo—Raitt and Rogers found much more to discuss. That is hardly surprising; they are two of the best slide players working today, artists who are passionately committed to taking their blues into new sonic terrains.

Bonnie, Roy—let's talk some blues.

BONNIE RAITT: How does your new album, *Rhythm & Groove,* differ from your previous albums?

ROY ROGERS: This record is a little bit of a departure because it has much more of a live feel than a studio feel, and you can really hear the difference. Also, I took much more time to write the songs this time—I fine-tuned 'em a little more. I let them rest and put them aside and came back to them a couple of times. I don't always have the luxury to do that; there isn't always time.

together, there's more than hours Patrick's Day— nd Rogers found ey are two of the assionately com- s.

& Groove, differ

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Raitt listen then she wants to hear some fine bottleneck at the end of a long, hard day? Meet Roy Rogers.

Introduction by Gary Graff Interview by Bonnie Raitt

RAITT: Exactly. People have always asked me how come I didn't write more songs during the middle part of my career, or just even up until *Nick of Time* [*Capitol, 1989*]. A lot of it is because I used to tour 10 months out of the year with a bunch of guys in a bus, and it was difficult to find that little quiet moment to write. I kind of have to have be in a Zen place.

ROGERS: I don't have to be in a quiet place. I've found that inspiration can come at any time—you just gotta be open to it. I'm a napkin guy. Something will hit while I'm eating dinner, and I'll just write it down immediately. John Lee Hooker comes to mind as somebody that can tap into his creativity at any given moment. I've seen him compose songs right on the spot, in the middle of recording sessions. Of course, he's a true blues conduit; he has that gift we all strive for.

RAITT: One thing I really admire are your blues arrangements. How do you go about putting them together?

ROGERS: I pretty much work out band arrangements in my head. It happens naturally during the course of writing a new song. When I'm working on a new idea, I'll play it over and over again with just a guitar until I hear all the parts in my head. But I can't take all the credit: I have a great band. Many times I'll roll an idea past them and they'll digest it and feed it back in a completely fresh, inventive way.

RAITT: Right. You can create a particular groove in your head, but you still have to add that band chemistry. A great band should operate like Muddy Waters's old group—those guys didn't even have to think about getting out of each other's way.

ROGERS: Blues is basically about feel—the big groove that's created through musical interplay. On this album I really wanted my band to function as an ensemble; I didn't want it to sound like me and a "backup band." I think it's far more interesting for people to listen to a group of musicians working as a band, as opposed to watching a group that's subservient to a frontman.

RAITT: All the great jazz masters, like Mose Allison, have had trios that they've played with for years and years. Tony Bennett's band is a great example of a group of musicians that sounds seamless because they've been working with each other for years. They don't even have to make eye contact—they just respond.

ROGERS: I really appreciate that because it's very, very hard to find people that really can connect musically.

RAITT: You know, you have such a natural feel for those quarter tones in your slide playing, I'm surprised you're not performing Arabic or Pakistani music. You're able to stretch the blues in a way that I haven't heard since Little Feat.

ROGERS: Well, thanks for the compliment. I'm a big fan of Little Feat, particularly the late Lowell George, who was really a wonderful writer and producer. The thing about blues is it's the universal language. It's cross-cultural. I've seen a lot albums come out recently with various cross-cultural kinds of players; David Lindley and Ry Cooder have both experimented with world music. I think we'll see more of that. It's a good way to expand your playing while still remaining rooted.

RAITT: It's hard to be original with a slide these days, when almost every record out of Nashville and every truck or blue jean commercial has that same slide sound.

ROGERS: Well, so many people go for the same tone. It may have something to do with the way modern guitars and amps sound. People tend to rely on the gear to make them sound a certain way, instead of thinking about their approach. Nothing against the new technology, but it should only support you on what your quest is and what you're trying to say.

RAITT: It's about having honor and respect for the way those amps and guitars sound. You can't push a button on a synthesizer and sound like Stevie Ray Vaughan.

ROGERS: On the other hand, I still try to be open to the latest developments in gear. Who knows? I might find a new amp tomorrow and say, "Wow!" I try not to limit myself to the vintage market.

RAITT: I actually get a little nervous about these people who store beautiful vintage guitars in warehouses. The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame recently asked me if they could have one of my guitars for their walls. I said, "No! I'm using it! I'm not dead yet! Excuse me! I don't have 50 other guitars."

ROGERS: It's a mixed bag for me. Instruments should be played, but nevertheless I understand the business aspect of it. People do tend to collect things.

RAITT: Yeah, but get 'em and play 'em! Tell me—do you think you still have some new places to explore with the slide? I'm always astounded at how many new sounds you come up with on each record. Is that something that you have to spend a lot of time consciously thinking about?

ROGERS: Yes, but it's something I enjoy doing. I go about creating new sounds in a variety ways. My favorite way to vary my sound is by combining electric and acoustic instruments. I also use a variety of amps—a lot of small amps —in the studio. They can range from an old Fender Princeton to an Epiphone with an old tremolo unit to an old Valco amp. But, like I just said, I'll still use newer amps, as well. For example, my stage setup is a Boogie amp with a Leslie speaker. I'll also use different guitars to affect my tone. My main ax is a Martin New Yorker with an old pickup in it. I also use a '57 Strat and a '58 Les Paul Jr. But basically I'll use just about any strange electric and acoustic guitar I can get my hands on. For me, the joy of doing it is coming up with something new. I really like to experiment when I'm working in the studio. I try not to think too much about what instrument or amp to use on any given track. I'll just say, "Let's try this and see where it takes me."

RAITT: Over the years, do you feel there's been an improvement in outlets for the blues? It seems like there's more appreciation for the blues than ever.

ROGERS: I would agree. But, ironically, very little comes from the radio. It seems to come from other outlets, like commercials and films.

RAITT: There are a lot of funky blues musicians who I know in L.A. whose primary source of income comes from scoring televison sitcoms. They get work singing theme songs!

ROGERS: Isn't that strange? That's where the change has come in the last, say, 10 years. Radio has just tightened up completely. You know, when we grew up in the Sixties, underground stations would play Miles Davis, Muddy Waters, Lightning Hopkins, the Doors and Jimi Hendrix, all in the space of 15 minutes. You just don't hear that now, and it's a shame.

RAITT: I guess our saving grace is that no matter what happens to our recording careers, we'll still be able to go down to the local bar and play our slide guitars and sing and make a living until we drop. There will always be people who will want to go out and hear the real deal. There's also all this talk about the Internet and how that's going to help expose people to music they might not ordinarily hear. For example, you can actually punch up John Lee Hooker and get a little piece of what he sounds like. But I guess it's a double-edged sword: on the one hand, you've got to watch what your teenagers are downloading; on the other hand, they might be downloading the Bulgarian Women's Chorus.

ROGERS: There you go!

RAITT: You like them?

ROGERS: I love them!

RAITT: I love them, too! Let's play slide guitar with them!

ROGERS: I would love to! Let's do that some time. Talk about harmonies . . . ●

SAD BUT TRUE

By J.D. Considine

YOU EXPECT TO be surprised by a new Metallica album. . . . *And Justice for All* (Elektra, 1988), with its melodic drama and epic scale, was hardly what anyone would have anticipated after the lean, unrelenting power of *Master of Puppets* (Elektra, 1986); nor would any listener have imagined that *Justice* would be followed by the tight-and-tuneful approach taken by *Metallica*. It's only natural, then, that *Load*—arriving a full five years after *Metallica*—would find the band making some heavy changes.

Unfortunately, none of them are for the better.

Well, all right . . . the haircuts aren't so bad. But the songs? Over-long, unimaginative and, for the most part, stuck in an enervating, mid-tempo plod, these tunes achieve what many fans would have considered impossible—they make Metallica seem boring.

It isn't just that we've heard it all before—though the intro to "King Nothing" does seem distressingly "Enter Sandman"-ish—so much as that we've already heard it done by others. Whether it's the overly-dramatized, acoustic-guitar sensitivity of "Mama Said" or the grunge-by-numbers of "Hero of the Day," *Load* hardly seems like the work of innovators. As Hetfield sings after the Aerosmith-style rhythm break in "Ain't My Bitch," "What's wrong? I've already heard this song before."

We've also heard it done better, particularly when it comes to blues-based material like "2 X 4" and "Poor Twisted Me." Boogie tunes are supposed to bounce, chug, or choogle, the idea being to generate some locomotion from those revved-up John Lee Hooker riffs. But Metallica simply trudges, leaning into each lick with all the enthusiasm of a kid on his way to an algebra test. So "2 X 4" comes across like warmed-over Foghat (love the way James Hetfield "gets down" with lyrics like "I'm a-gonna make you, shake you, take you"), while the treated vocals and stiff-as-a-board riffage make "Poor Twisted Me" sound like some kind of robot parody of ZZ Top. As opposed to "Ronnie," which sounds like ZZ Top on NyQuil. It's enough to revive the whole "Can a white band play the blues?" argument.

Making this all the more inexplicable is the fact that Metallica is definitely capable of better. Go back to the version of "Sad But True" that's on *Live Shit—Binge and Purge* (Elektra, 1993) and you'll hear just how soulful the band can be. The closest *Load* gets to that kind of playing is the occasional Lars Ulrich flourish in "The House that Jack Built," but even then, the band loses momentum every time James "Don't Call Me Frampton" Hetfield gets that talk-box of his going.

Then again, *Load* doesn't seem as concerned with the band's instrumental side as it is with Hetfield's newfound vocal prowess. It isn't just "Until It Sleeps," which, between Hetfield's self-conscious crooning and all the prettily shimmering guitar work, sounds like a Chris Isaak single gone horribly awry; it's everywhere on the album, from the Michael Bolton-isms of "Bleeding Me" to the hokey harmony vocals that litter "2 X 4." And while it may be amusing to hear how many syllables Hetfield can pull from the word "bitch" in "Ain't My Bitch," the truth is, Snoop Doggy Dogg does it better.

Granted, it's not all bad. "Wasting My Hate" harks back to the breathless urgency of the band's early material while offering enough in the way of change-ups to keep from sounding like a retread. And apart from the voice-box guitar bits, "King Nothing" matches rhythmic intensity and melodic interest as well as anything in the band's catalog. More often than not, though, the band squanders its best ideas on overblown arrangements or pointless dramatics, like the way "Thorn Within" buries a wonderfully nasty chromatic riff amidst almost six minutes of compositional twaddle. Or the way "The Outlaw Torn" takes 45 seconds of melody and tortures it for 10 minutes.

This is a Load, all right. And you don't have to be Beavis or Butt-head to figure out of what. ●

talkin' blues

B.B. KING

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STARTIN' OUT STRONG

PLAYING SOLOS AT THE BEGINNING OF TUNES.

IF YOU'VE EVER seen me play live, you've probably noticed that I "stretch out" a lot more on stage than I do on my recordings. Not that I abuse this privilege—I play only what the song calls for—but I do have a lot more fun "going for it." That's why I have a number of live albums out: they give the fans a chance to listen to me play the blues as they're meant to be played, spontaneously and without the artificial atmosphere created by the recording studio.

One of the things I really like to do when I'm playing live is to kick off an uptempo blues number with a solo over a full 12-bar chorus before I start singing the tune. This pretty much gives notice to the audience that B.B. is in the house; more importantly, it gives a signal to the band that I'm seriously ready to play and they'd better be on their toes.

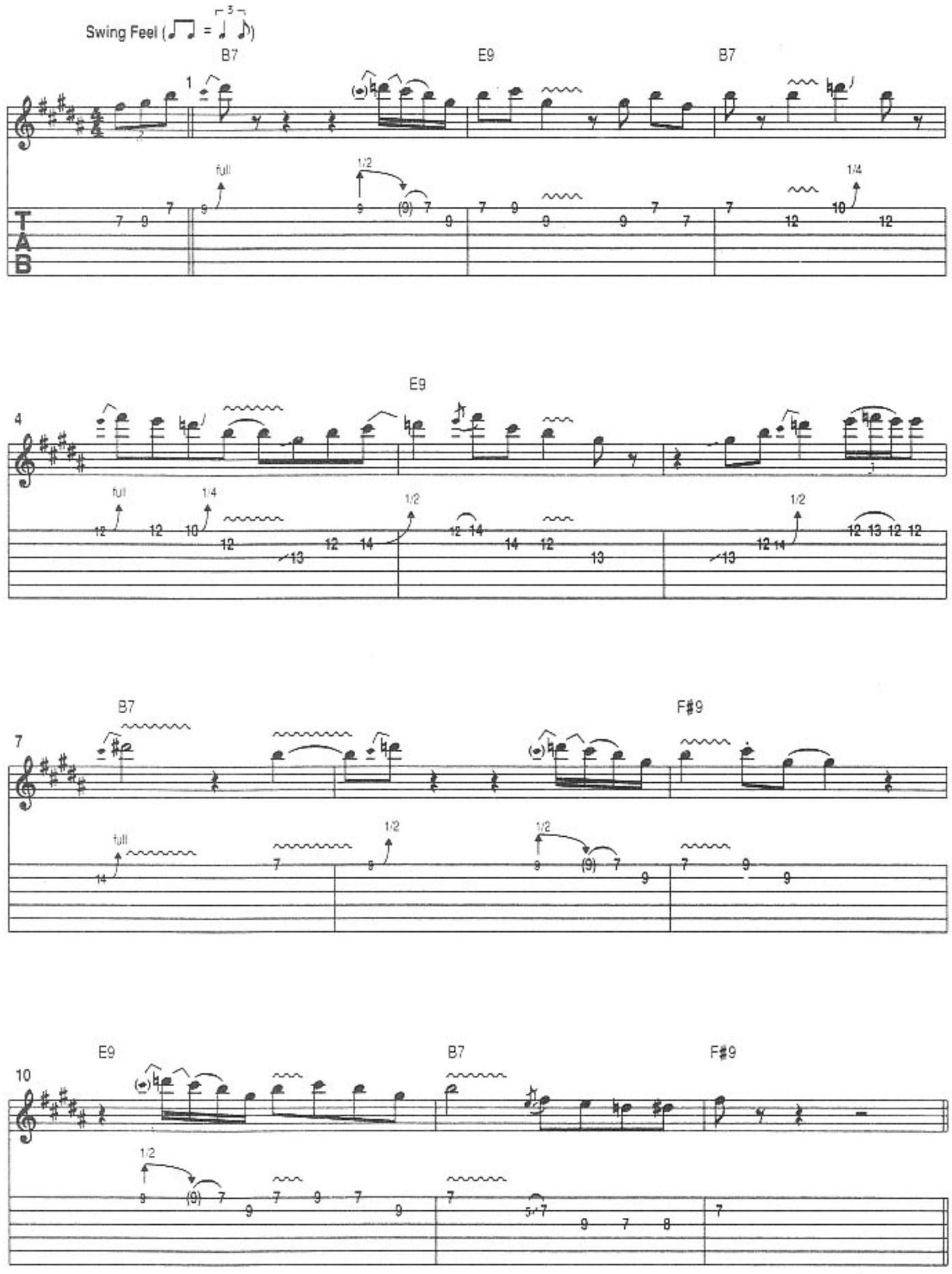
Of course, this approach can backfire if your opening solo sounds tentative or without direction. That's why you should approach playing every chorus as if you were telling a story. Your solo should have a beginning, middle and end. It should keep building your interest, peak and have a satisfying conclusion. And it should be told with authority, excitement and passion.

Just as a story is composed of sentences and paragraphs, a solo is composed of licks and phrases. And just as a story doesn't make any sense unless the sentences and paragraphs are told in the right order, a solo doesn't work unless the licks and phrases are connected logically, with a specific direction. You can have all the hot licks in the world, but if you're not saying anything with them, it will sound like you're rambling on aimlessly with no purpose. Believe me, people do not want to listen to that!

Let me give you a real-life musical example. "Paying the Cost to Be the Boss," a popular number at my shows, also happens to be one of the tunes that starts with an instrumental chorus. Whether the tune goes over or not totally depends on how I deliver that opening solo. If I say what I have to say with confidence, the audience will come along with me for the ride, because they will want to see what will happen next. If I don't, they might get bored and start thinking about going to the lobby for a drink.

FIGURE 1 is similar to what I might play to kick off "Paying the Cost to Be the Boss." Notice that even though the solo doesn't contain a lot of notes, it makes its point. The sparsely used 16th notes repeat the same four-note phrase over B7 in bar 1, and in bar 8 to set up F#9 bar 9. The purpose is two-fold: playing the same notes over different chords gives them different harmonic implications, making the simple phrase sound a lot more interesting. Repeating a phrase also provides melodic continuity within a solo and gives the listener a familiar point of reference.

FIGURE 1



For more ideas on how to play choruses at the beginning of uptempo blues numbers, listen to some of my other tunes, like "Every Day I Sing the Blues" and "You Upset Me Baby." Remember to deliver everything you play with conviction! See you next month! ●

astroink

WHITE ZOMBIE'S J.

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SO, YOU WANNA FORM A BAND?

PART VIII, PAYING THEM DUES

IN THE LAST issue we started talking about gigging and touched on stuff like playing anywhere you possibly can, getting your own soundman, having your friends help carry your shit, transportation and networking. This month we're gonna add more to this angle.

SET STRUCTURE

One thing that almost every good live band does is to structure their set to achieve maximum impact. Don't just go out there and play your songs in any random order. Plan your set out so that it has peaks and valleys, especially if you're in a high-energy band. Start with two or three "thrashers" and then maybe ease off a little and play something slower so you and the audience can rest.

DYNAMICS

The science of dynamics, or volume contrasts, dictates that if you come out blazing and then keep on blazing without pause, people will start becoming numb to it. Then, no matter how heavy your stuff gets, it'll lack impact. But if you play something heavy and then follow it with something quieter, then go back to playing something heavy again, it will seem really heavy (listen to some Nirvana records—they were masters of this art). Also, once you've played out a couple of times and recorded some stuff for people to take home with them, you'll probably have one or two songs that are your most popular; play one at the beginning of your set and one at the end—in with a bang, out with a bang.

KEEP IT GOING

Some bands like to keep things spontaneous and loose by playing gigs with no set list and deciding collectively what song they're gonna play next while they're actually on stage. That may be cool and adventurous for you, but it can also be really unfair to the audience if you have a lot of dead space between songs. PEOPLE NEED TO ROCK! Take your audience into consideration—they came to see you to have a good time.

SHIT HAPPENS

Obviously, when you're playing live shows, something will go wrong with your gear sooner or later. Make sure you bring a spare of anything that could possibly break—you'll be really, really glad that you did. If it can break, it will. Bring spare strings, instrument and speaker cables, picks, drum sticks, drum heads, a spare snare drum (if you can afford it), batteries (if you're using stomp boxes), tubes (if you're using a tube amp) and definitely amp fuses. The latter is something I never thought about until my Marshall head blew up. My advice is to get one of those little metal boxes that you store spare fuses in and tape it to the back of your amp.

Another thing you should definitely have a spare of, if at all possible, is a guitar. Even if your backup axe is really lame, it's infinitely better to be able to continue your set with a less-than-perfect sound than to have to stop the gig altogether if something goes wrong. There's nothing as bad as watching a show where the guitarist breaks a string and then has to actually stand there on stage and put a new one on. I once saw that happen to the guitar player in a band you've heard of: he snapped a string on a Jackson with a Floyd Rose locking system on it, which was his only guitar. Because he had the bridge set up to "float" (so he could pull the bar up as well as push it down), as soon as the string broke, the guitar went way out of tune. So, the band had to stop playing while he stood onstage, undid the locking nut, took the old string off, snipped the ball-end off the new string, put it on, stretched the new string out, re-tuned the guitar, locked the nut up again and re-tuned again. It took five long minutes and it sucked!

SPREAD THE WORD

Can you imagine the most super-rich rock star you know of standing outside of a club handing out gig fliers in the middle of winter, freezing his or her ass off? Or running around at four o'clock in the morning with a bucket of wheat paste, putting up posters? Well, they all did it. Fliers for shows are good because they help let people know what's going on when, where and for how much. It's good to create some form of band logo (the Kiss and Metallica logos are great examples) or symbol that people will instantly identify with your band. There are countless computer graphics programs that can help make type look cool.

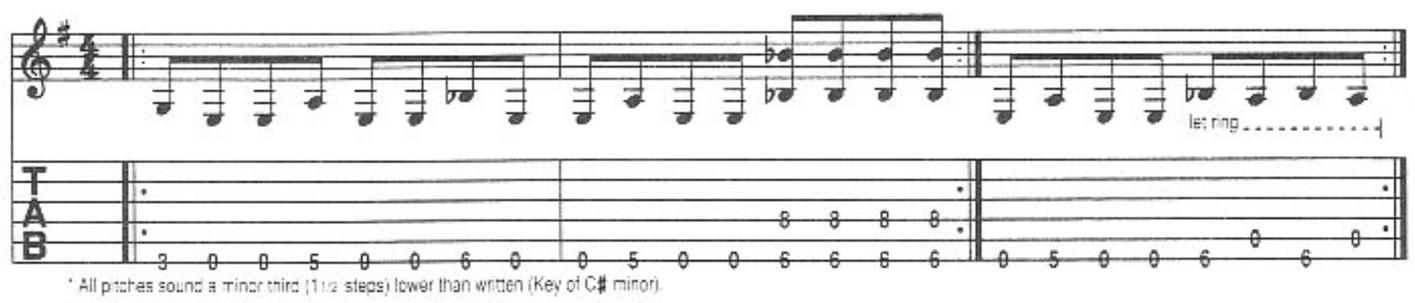
As well as handing out gig fliers at clubs and on the streets there may be guitar and record stores that will let you put one up on their bulletin board. You can also put fliers on telephone poles if there's a hip neighborhood in your town where a lot of people will see them. Before you do this, though, *check your town's local laws regarding postering:* there are a lot of places where it's illegal!

GETTING DOWN TO BIZ

Having a band is kind of like having a company. Unfortunately, especially at the beginning, you're going to have to keep putting your money into the band without any return on your investment. No one's paying you yet, but you have to buy equipment and maintain it, afford a practice space, transportation and so on. It sucks, but that's just the way it is—it's a test of faith, really. But, if you stick with it, one day you might actually start making some bucks and at that point you definitely want to have some form of band fund—maybe even a band bank account. This way, you'll have a pool of money that you can tap into to pay for photocopying fliers, financing a demo, printing T-shirts, stickers, whatever. Decide who in the band is the most responsible, and designate him/her as band accountant.

DAMN, I'VE TALKED so much we don't have much room left for playing this month. To make up for this, we'll do a lot more playing next issue. **FIGURE 1** is the "spy movie theme" verse riff of "Super-Charger Heaven" from *Astro-Creep 2000* and is a good example of two ideas we've discussed in recent columns—octaves and skronking. The octaves occur in bar 2, while the skronk (which is caused by the fretted Bb note on the low E string ringing against the open A note) happens at the end of bar 4. ●

FIGURE 1 · Detune gtr. 1½ steps (low to high: C♯ F♯ B E G♯ C♯)



* All pitches sound a minor third (1½ steps) lower than written (Key of C♯ minor).

wild stringdom

JOHN PETRUCCI

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ROMANCING THE FRETBOARD, PART 3

CHOPIN ARRANGED FOR GUITAR: THE FINAL CHAPTER.

WELL, GANG, HERE it is: the final installment of Chopin's Piano Concerto in A minor, Opus No. 2. Those of you who have braved the storm of 16th notes over the past two months have earned the right to pat yourselves on the back.

You're going to get a bit of a reprieve this month, because, at the beginning of this section, Chopin restates the first six bars of the piece and then adds bars 15-17 of the opening section for good measure (use my column "Romancing the Fretboard, Part 1" [June 1996 GW] as a reference). Assuming you've worked out these parts already (and I hope you did), that only leaves you with five new measures to learn. Compared to the amount of information you tackled the last couple of months, this lesson should be a piece of cake!

Notice that there are a number of quick position shifts, particularly on the same string, in measures 7 and 8 and 10-13. Executing them properly is not as hard as it looks. The trick is to move your entire left hand in one quick motion to the next position instead of stretching into it with your pinkie or index finger. Start slowly at first, and make sure you refer to the tablature for the proper fingerings.

There's only one other tricky spot in this section. In measure 9, you'll come across a fairly difficult passage that requires some serious left-hand stretching. Here, Chopin leaves the chromatic scale for just a brief moment to outline the Dm, Am and E7 chords using thirds and fourths as they occur in the A harmonic-minor scale. Notice that the first note of each interval is approached chromatically from below. Use only your index finger and pinkie to play the intervals; it will make executing the wide stretches easier. Again, take it slowly and don't force anything—you don't want to hurt yourself!

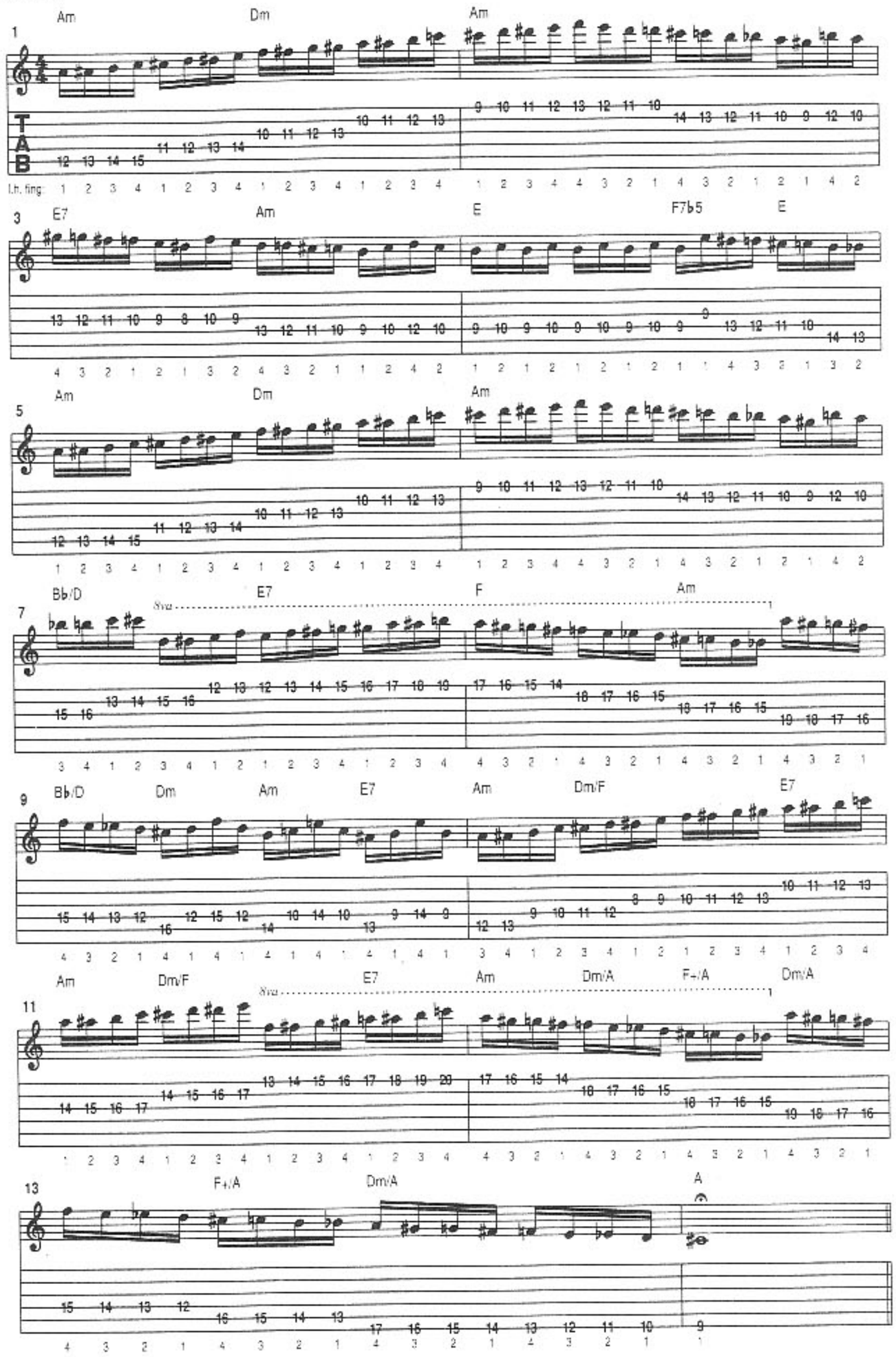
I use the unorthodox left-hand fingering in measure 9 because it enables me to maintain a smooth alternate picking pattern. This piece is played at an extremely fast tempo, and the last thing you want to do is break your right-hand rhythm worrying if the next note lands on an upstroke or downstroke.

Keep in mind that you can "borrow" melodic ideas from this piece and incorporate them into your own solos. For example, the second measure can be used as a great connecting line from one A minor-pentatonic or blues lick to another. Experiment using other lines from this piece.

Once you have this month's section down, try playing the concerto in its entirety. Record yourself playing the chord changes at a slow tempo (or have a friend play them) and go for it! There's nothing like tackling a challenging piece of music to make you a better player.

If you liked working on this piece and want to check out more of Chopin's music, pick up a copy of *Chopin: Complete Preludes and Etudes for Solo Piano*, published by Dover Books. Other classical composers whose works sound great arranged for guitar include the "three B's": Bach, Beethoven and Brahms. And remember: always, always approach music with an open mind. Listen to other musical styles and learn from them. It will help your development as a musician immeasurably. See you next time! ●

FIGURE 1



JoeysGuitarTabs.net

JoeysGuitarTabs.net

brain stew/jaded

GREEN DAY

WORDS AND MUSIC BY BILLIE JOE ARMSTRONG,
FRANK WRIGHT AND MICHAEL PRITCHARD
TRANSCRIBED BY DAVE WHITEHILL

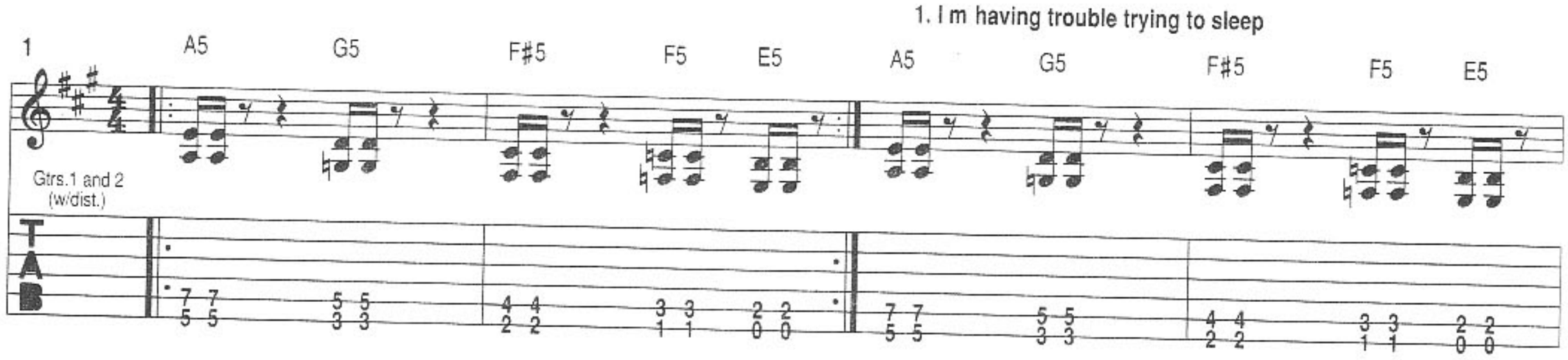
NOTE: All pitches sound approximately one quarter-step flat on recording.

A Into

Moderately Slow Rock ♩= 85

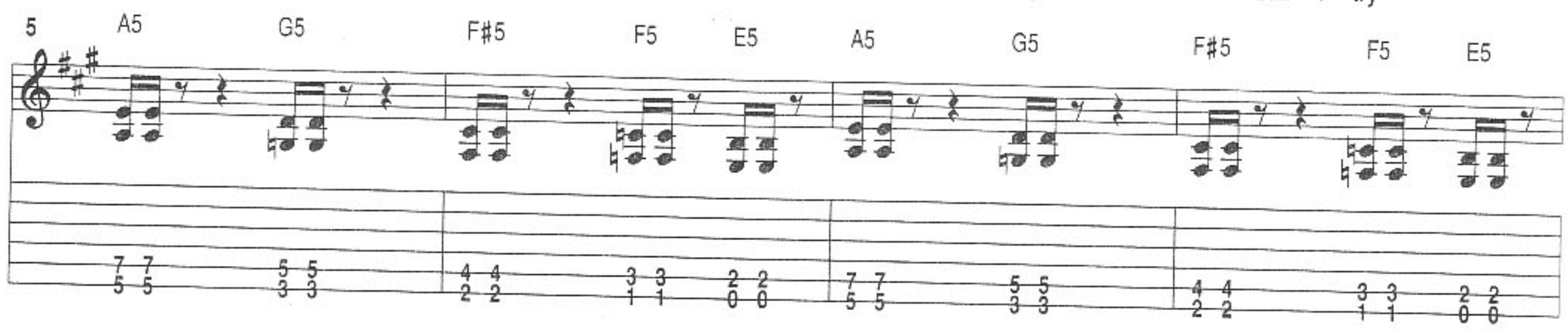
B 1st Verse

1. I m having trouble trying to sleep



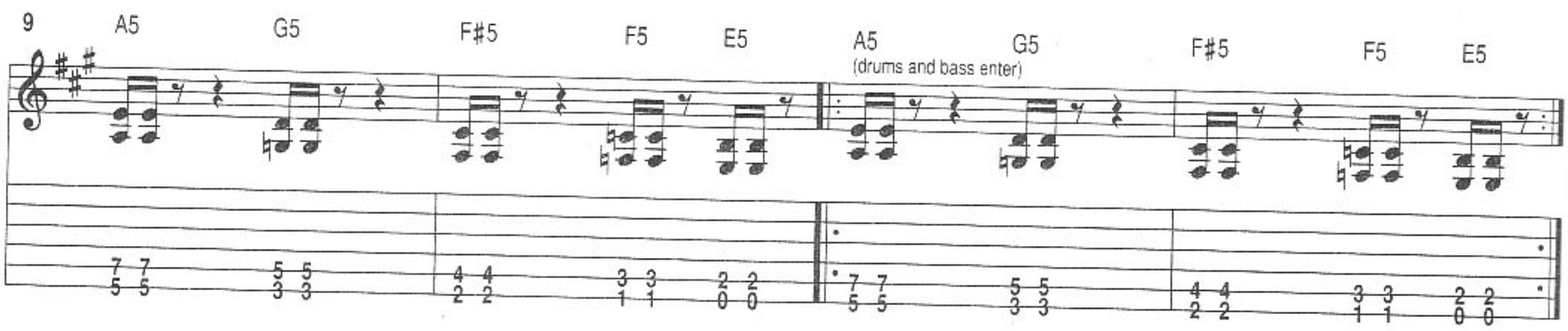
I m counting sheep but running out

As time ticks by still I try



No rest for crosstops in my mind

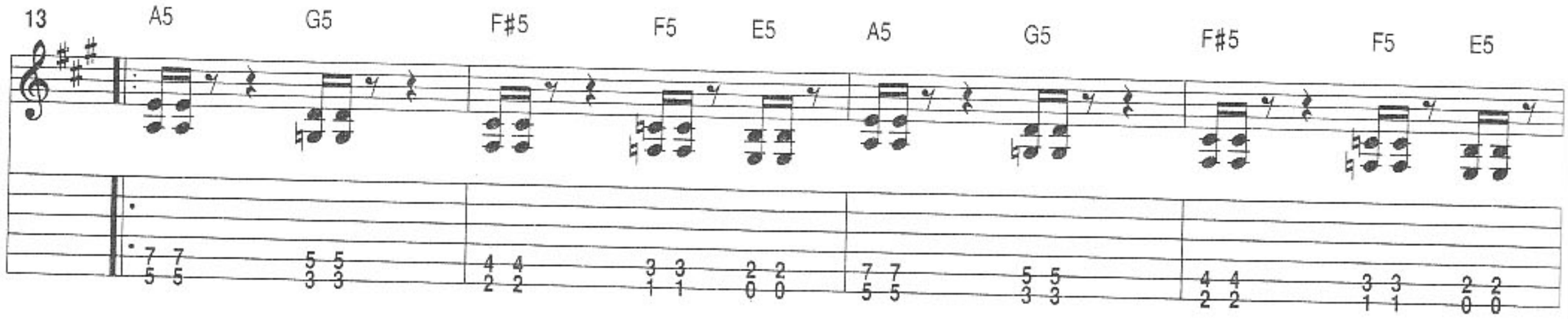
On my own here we go



C 2nd and 3rd Verses

2. My eyes feel like they re gonna bleed
3. My mind is set on overdrive

Dried up and buiging out my skull
The clock is laughin in my face



As heard on Green Day's Reprise recording *Insomniac*

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My mouth is dry
Crooked spine

My face is numb
My senses dulled

Fucked up and spun out in my room
Passed the point of delirium

On my own here we go
On my own here we go

17 A5 G5 F♯5 F5 E5 A5 G5 F♯5 F5 E5

21 A5 G5 F♯5 F5 E5

* NOTE: Strumming muted strings produces random harmonics.

23 A5 G5 F♯5 F5 E5

D 4th Verse

4. My eyes feel like they're gonna bleed

Dried up and bulging out my skull

25 A5 G5 F♯5 F5 E5 A5 G5 F♯5 F5 E5

Gtrs.1 and 2 play Fig. C simile

Gtr.3

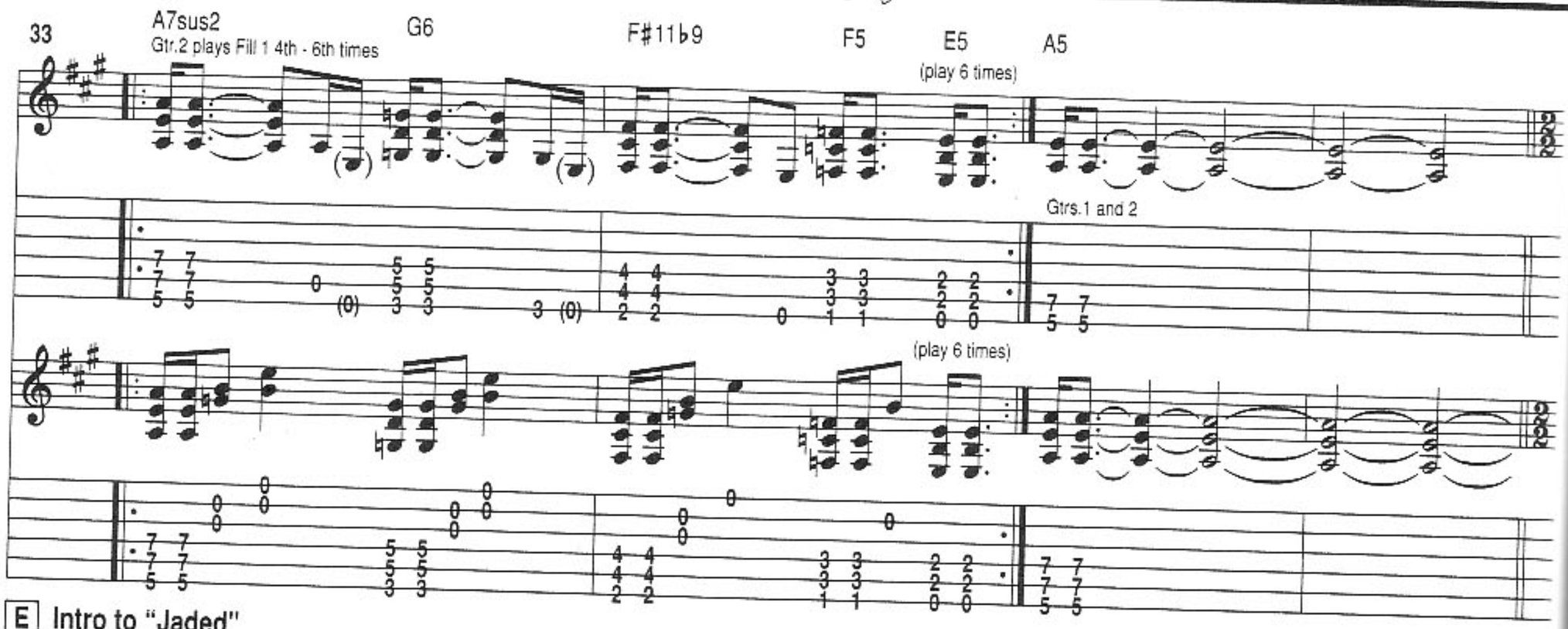
My mouth is dry

My face is numb

Fucked up and spun out in my room

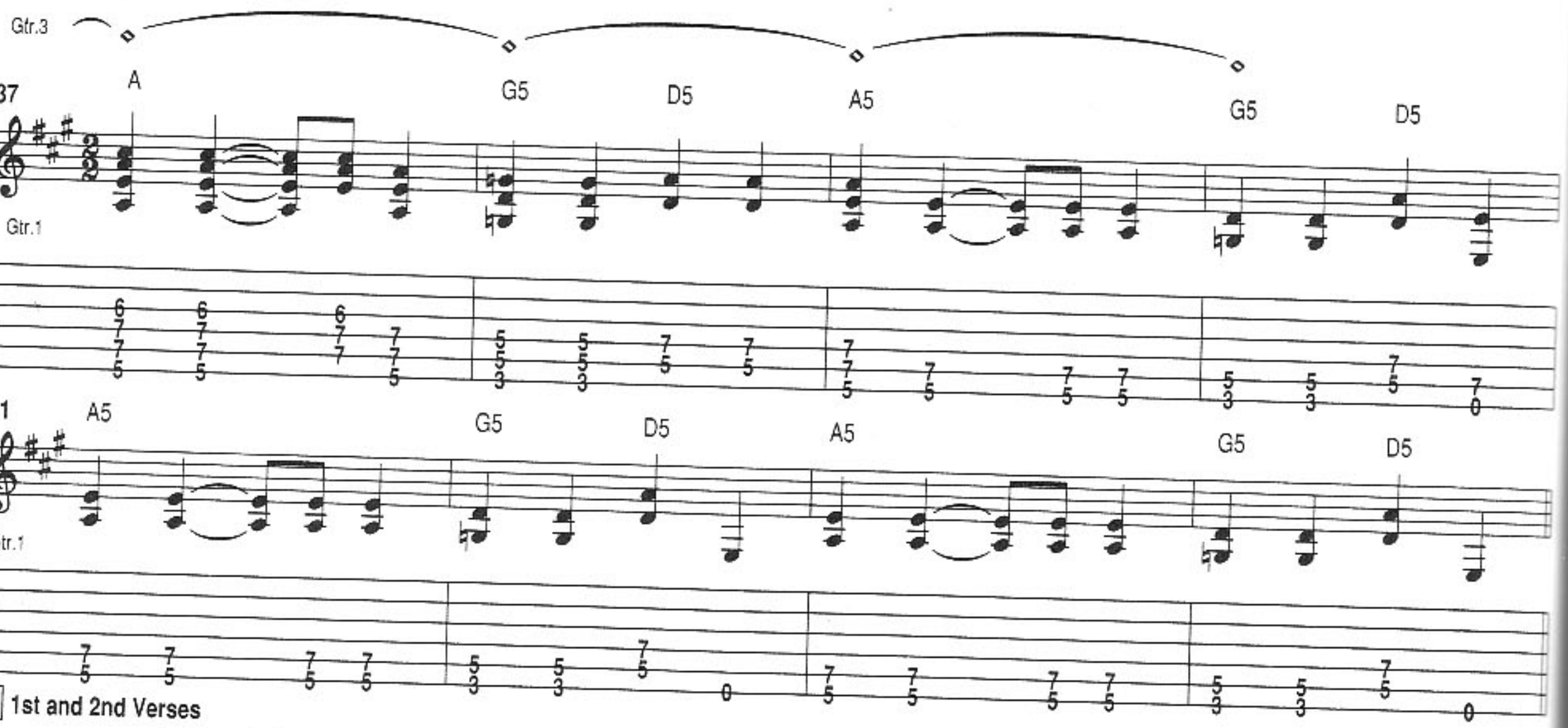
On my own here we go

29 A5 G5 F♯5 F5 E5 A5 G5 F♯5 F5 E5



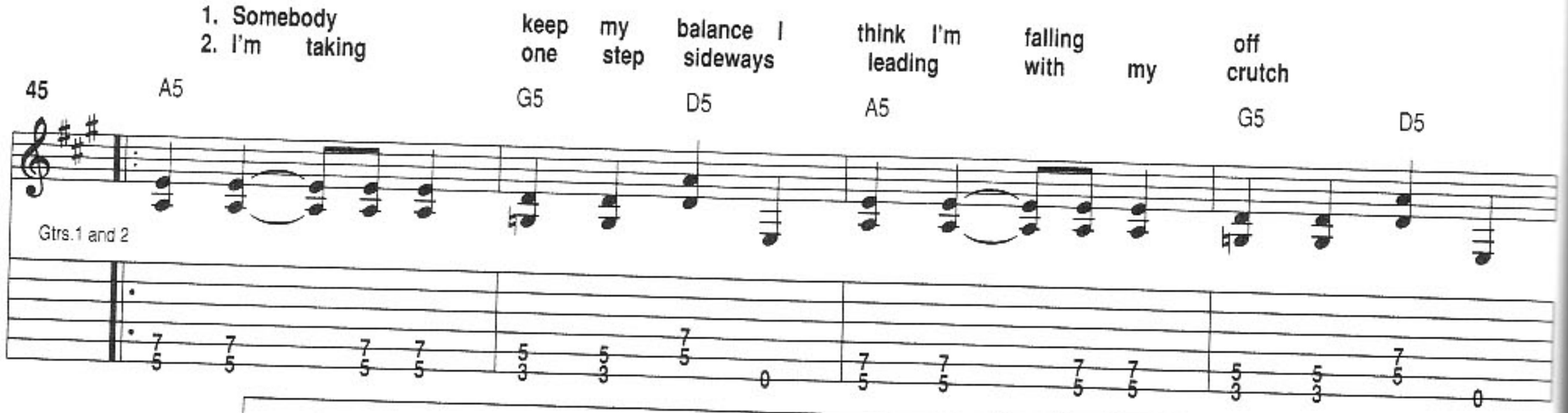
E Intro to "Jaded"

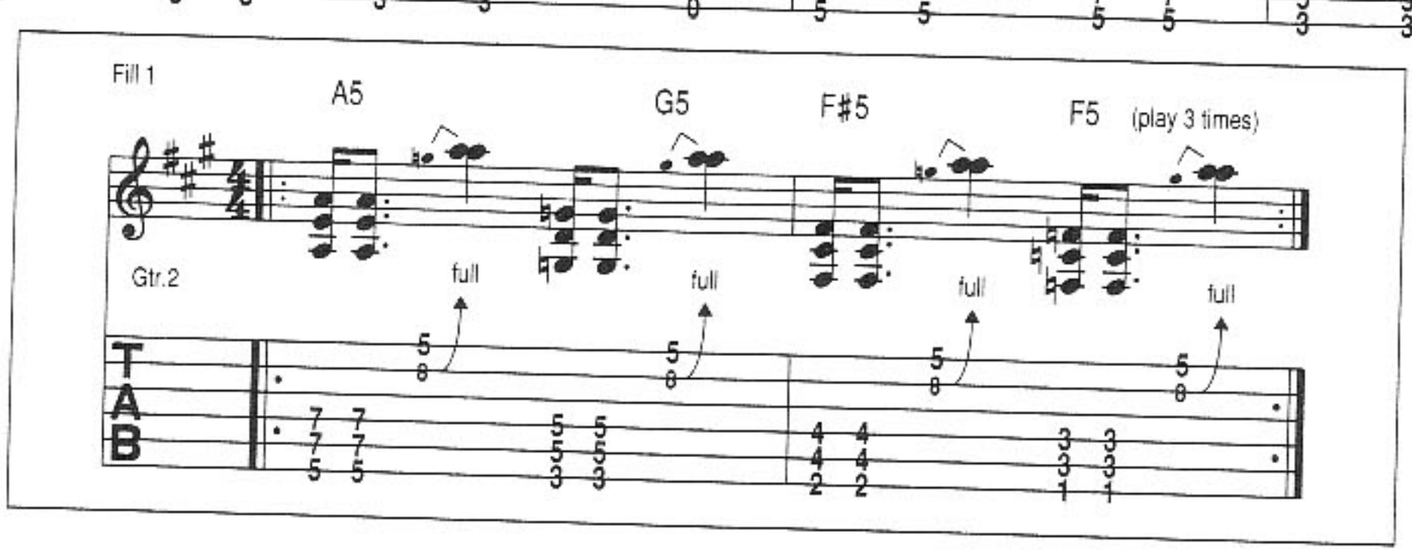
Very Fast Rock ♩= 160



F 1st and 2nd Verses

1. Somebody keep my balance I think I'm falling off
2. I'm taking one step sideways leading with my crutch





into a state of regression
Got a fucked up equilibrium

The expiration date ra-
Count down from 9 to 5 Hoo-

49 A5 G5 D5 A5 G5 D5 A5 G5 D5 A5

pidly coming up
ray we're gonna die

It's leaving me behind to rank
Blessed into our extinction

55 A5 G5 D5 A5 G5 D5 A5

𝄋

G Chorus

Always move forward going straight will get you

61 D

nowhere

65 A5 G5 A5 G5 A5

There is no progress Evolution killed it

69 D D♯

brain stew/jaded

GREEN DAY

(3rd time) *To Coda* ⊕

all I found my place in nowhere

73 E A5 G5 D5

79 A5 G5 D5 A5 G5 D5 A5

D.S. 𝄋 *al Coda* ⊕

84 G5 D5 A5 G5 D5 A5

⊕ *Coda*

in nowhere in

89 A5 G5 D5 A5 G5 D5

no where

93 A5 G5 D5 A5 G5 D5 A5

brain stew/jaded

bassline

GREEN DAY

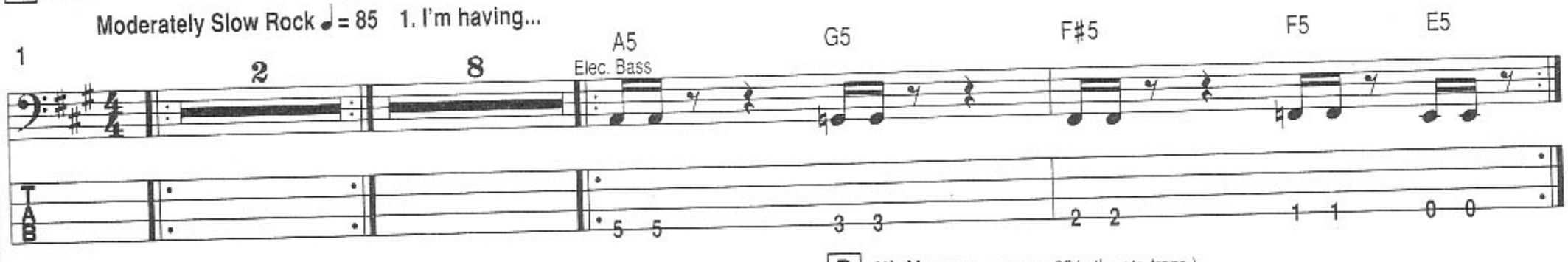
WORDS AND MUSIC BY BILLIE JOE ARMSTRONG,
FRANK WRIGHT AND MICHAEL PRITCHARD
TRANSCRIBED BY DAVE WHITEHILL

NOTE: All pitches sound approximately one quarter-step flat on recording.

A Intro

B 1st Verse

Moderately Slow Rock ♩= 85 1. I'm having...

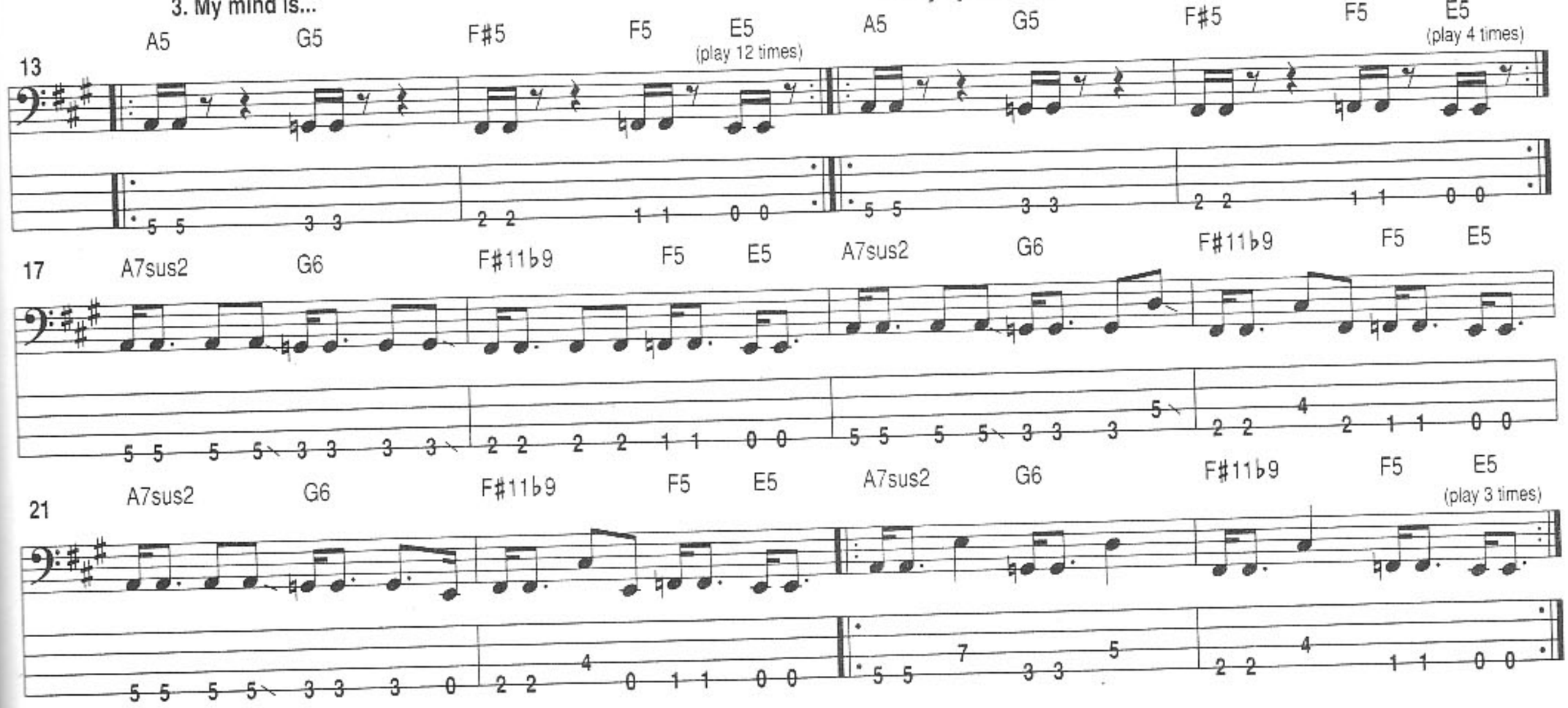


D 4th Verse (see meas. 25 in the gtr. trans.)

C 2nd and 3rd Verses

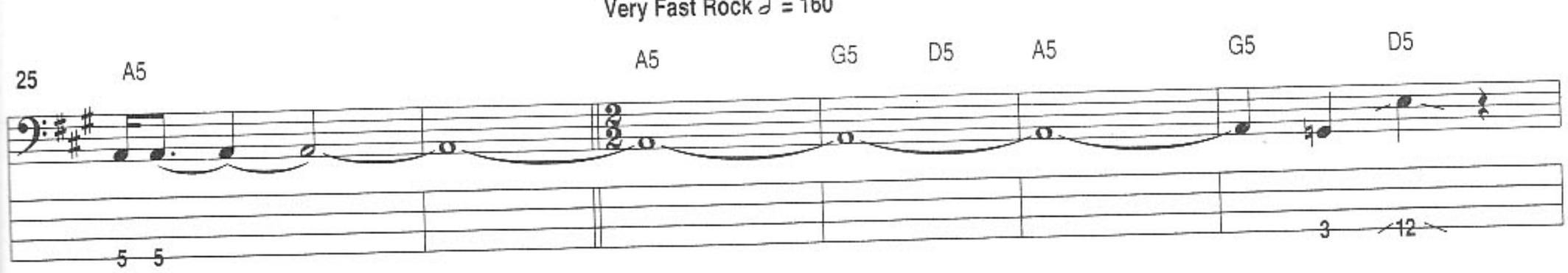
2. My eyes feel...
3. My mind is...

4. My eyes feel...



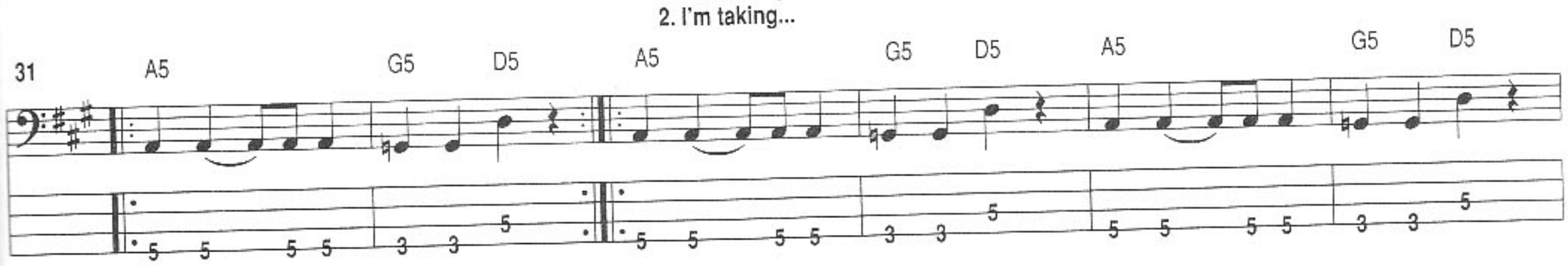
E Intro to "Jaded" (see meas. 37 in the gtr. trans.)

Very Fast Rock ♩ = 160



F 1st and 2nd Verses (see meas. 45 in the gtr. trans.)

1. Somebody...
2. I'm taking...



As heard on Green Day's Reprise recording *Insomniac*

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brain stew/jaded

GREEN DAY

37 A5 G5 D5 A5 G5 D5 A5 G5 D5

43 A5 G5 D5 A5 G5 D5 A5

𝄋

G Chorus (see meas. 61 in the gtr. trans.)

Always move...

49 D A5 G5 A5

55 A5 G5 A5 D D♯

(3rd time) *To Coda* ⊕

61 E

D.S. 𝄋 *al Coda* ⊕

67 A5 G5 D5 A5 G5 D5 A5

(play 5 times)

⊕ *Coda*

73 A5 G5 D5 A5 G5 D5 A5

(play 3 times)

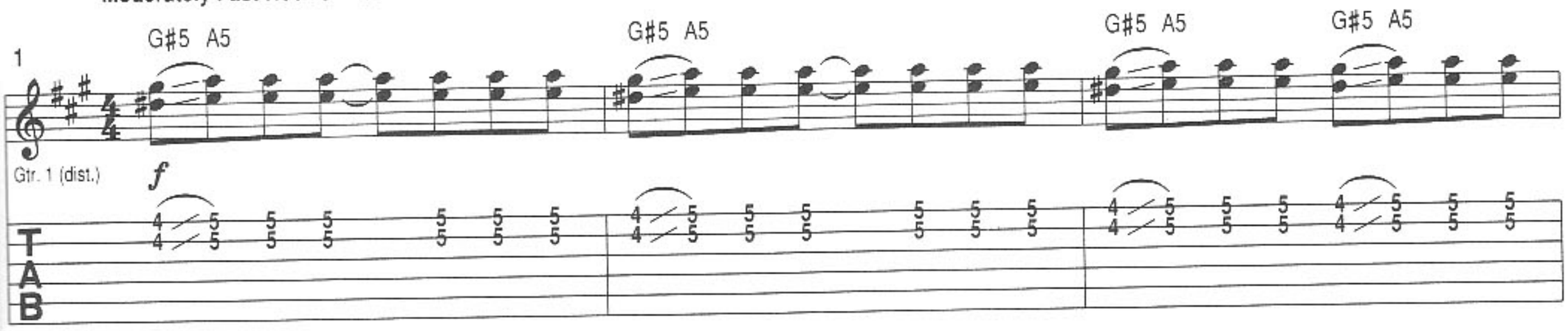
god save the queen

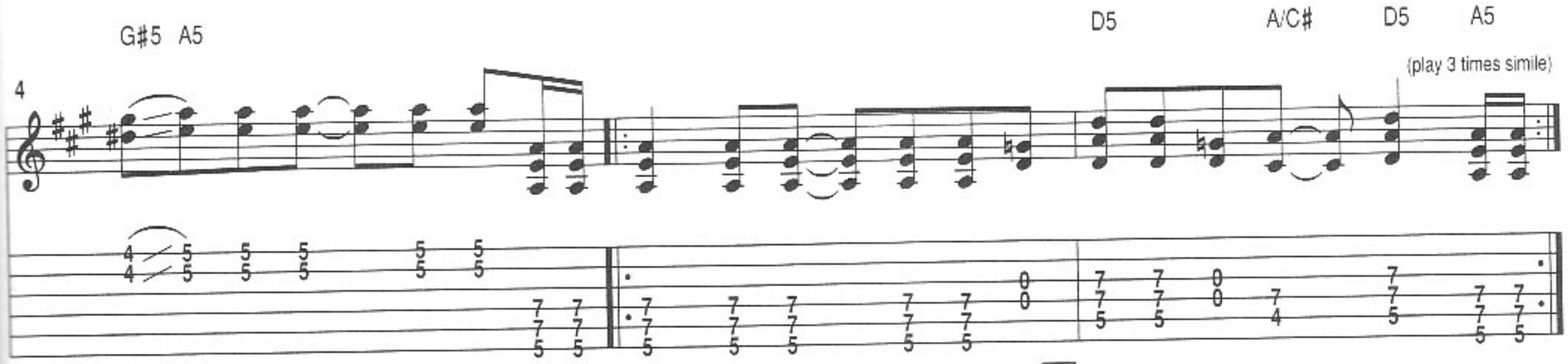
SEX PISTOLS

WORDS AND MUSIC BY GLEN MATLOCK,
JOHNNY ROTTEN, PAUL COOK AND STEVE JONES
TRANSCRIBED BY DALE TURNER

A Intro

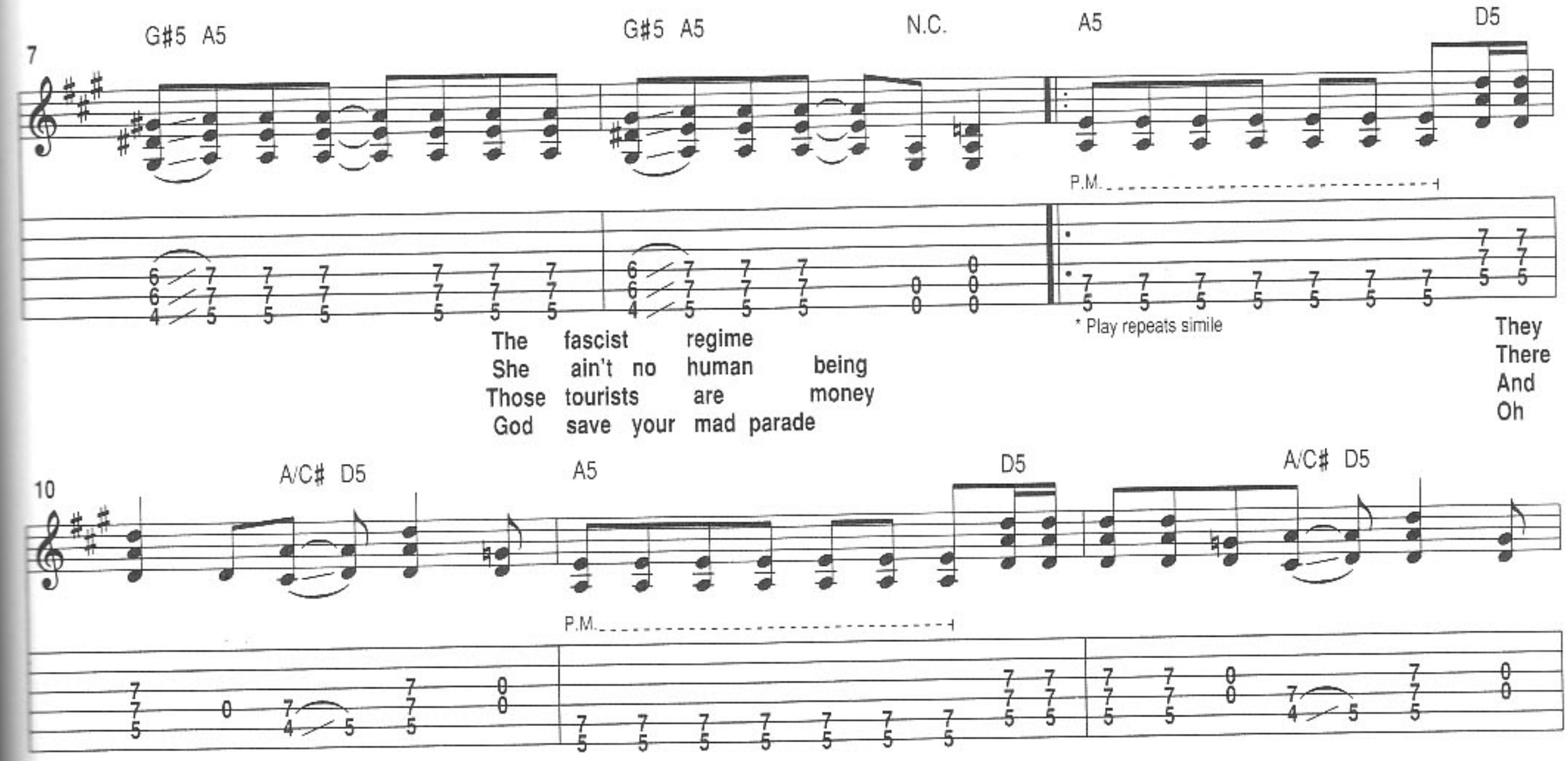
Moderately Fast Rock ♩ = 152





B Verses

1. God save the Queen
   God save the Queen
2. God save the Queen
   God save history



As heard on the Warner Bros. recording *Never Mind the Bollocks Here's the Sex Pistols*

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god save the queen

SEX PISTOLS

made you a moron
is no future
our figure head
Lord God have mercy

Potential H bomb
And England's dreaming
is not what she seems
All crimes are

13
A5 D5 A/C♯ D5 G♯5 A5 G♯5 A5

P.M.

1. 2.

C Pre-chorus

Oh
paid

1. Don't be told Do
2. And when there's no future How

16
G♯5 A5 N.C. G♯5 A5 E E B5 D♯5

what you want And don't be told Do what you need There's
can there be sin We're the flowers in the dust bin

19
E5 E D♯ E E5 B5 D♯ E

no future No future No future for
We're the poison in your human machine We're the future

22
E5 B5 D♯5 E5 D♯ E D♯5 B5 E E5

let ring

god save the queen

SEX PISTOLS

D Chorus

you
Your future

God save the Queen

We

N.C. A5 D5 A/C# D5 A5

25

Gtr. 1 plays Rhy. Fill 1 twice 2nd time

let ring

1/2

let ring

mean it man

We love our Queen

D5 A/C# D5 A5 E5

28

1/2

(2nd time) *To Coda*

God saves

D.S. 𝄋 *al Coda*

31 E A5 N.C.

grad. bend 1/2

Coda

E Guitar Solo

saves

34 A5 N.C. * F#5

P.M.

full 1/2

* Chords implied by bass gtr. (next 9 meas.)

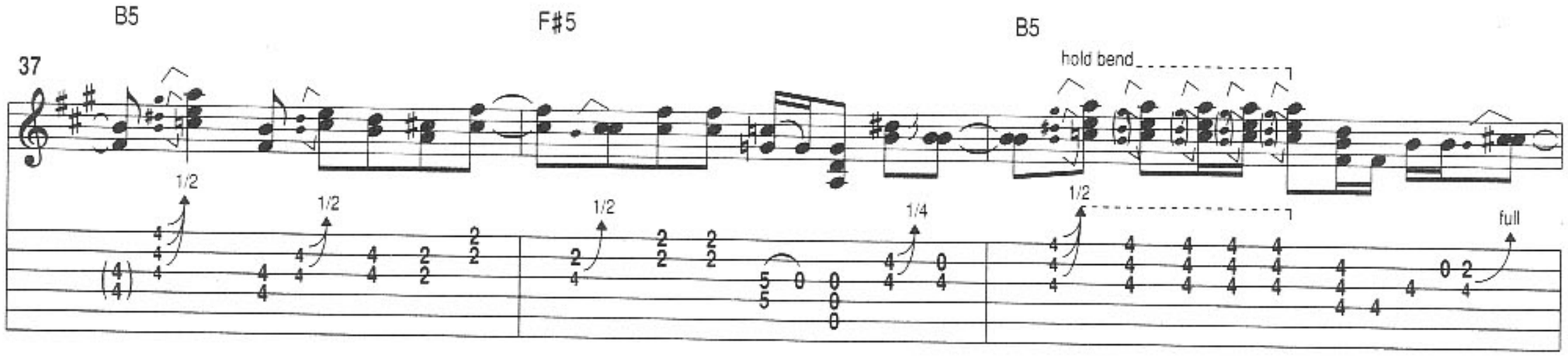
Rhy. Fill 1 A5 D5 A/C# D5

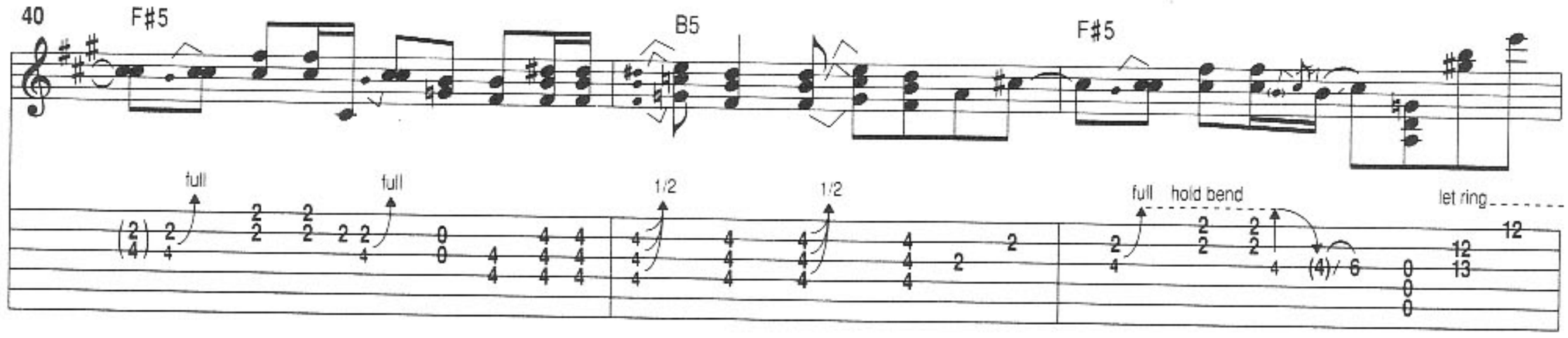
Gtr. 1

1/4

god save the queen

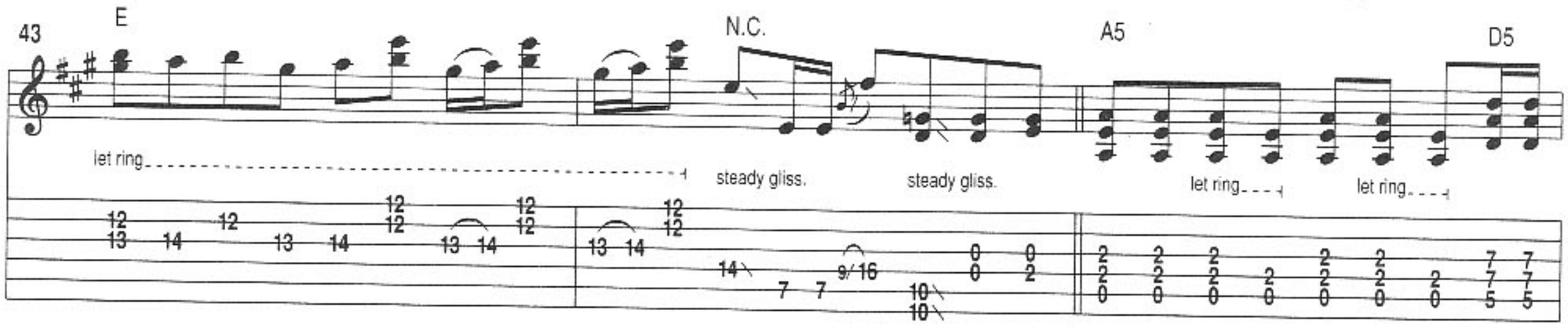
SEX PISTOLS





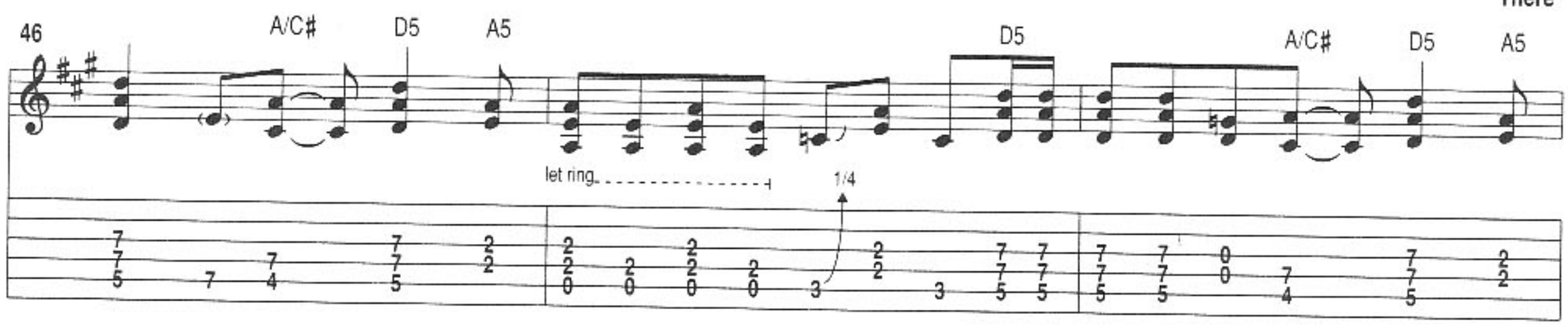
F Out-chorus

God save the Queen



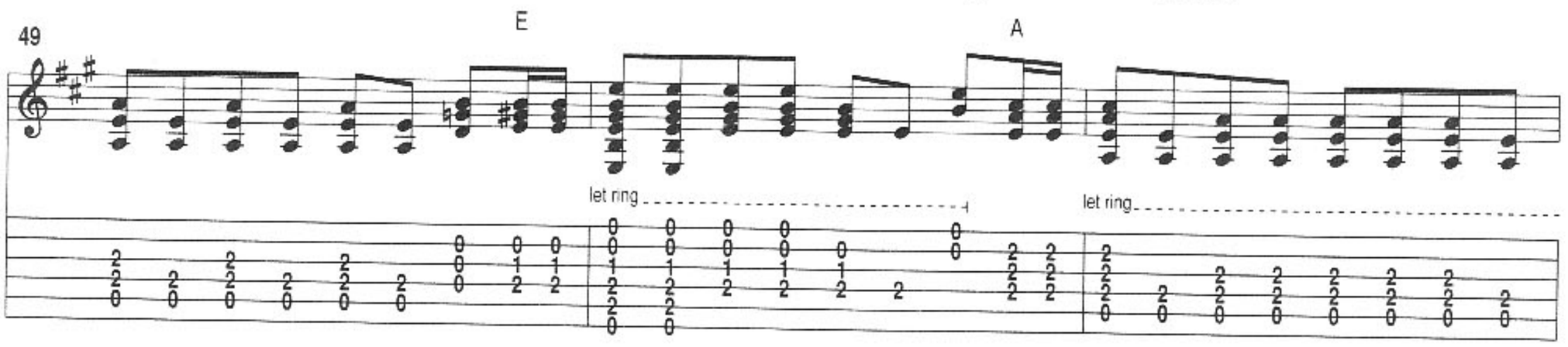
We mean it man

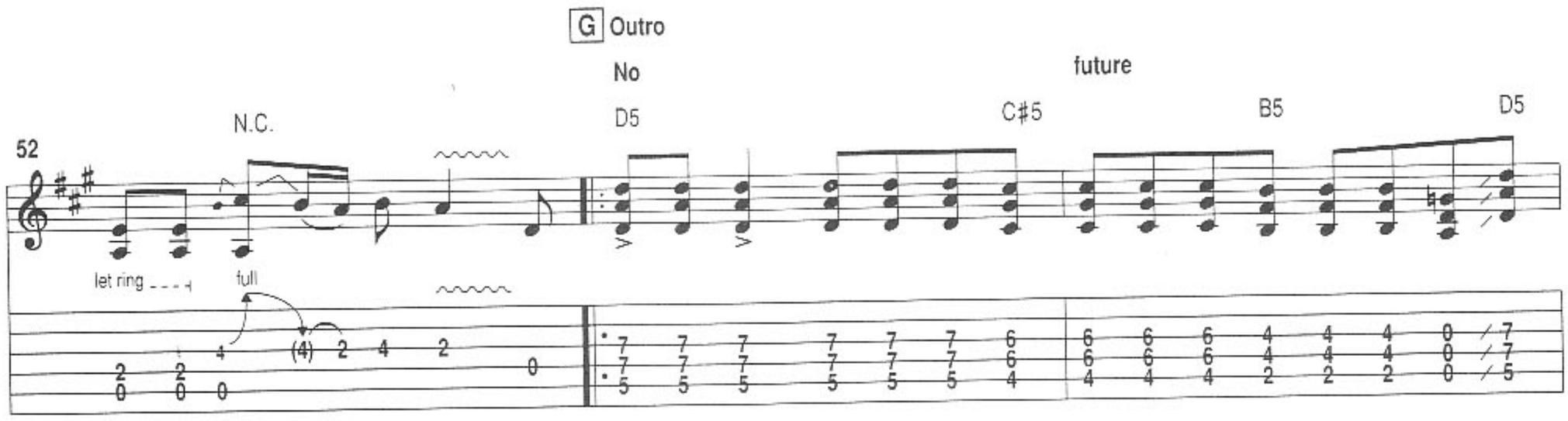
There

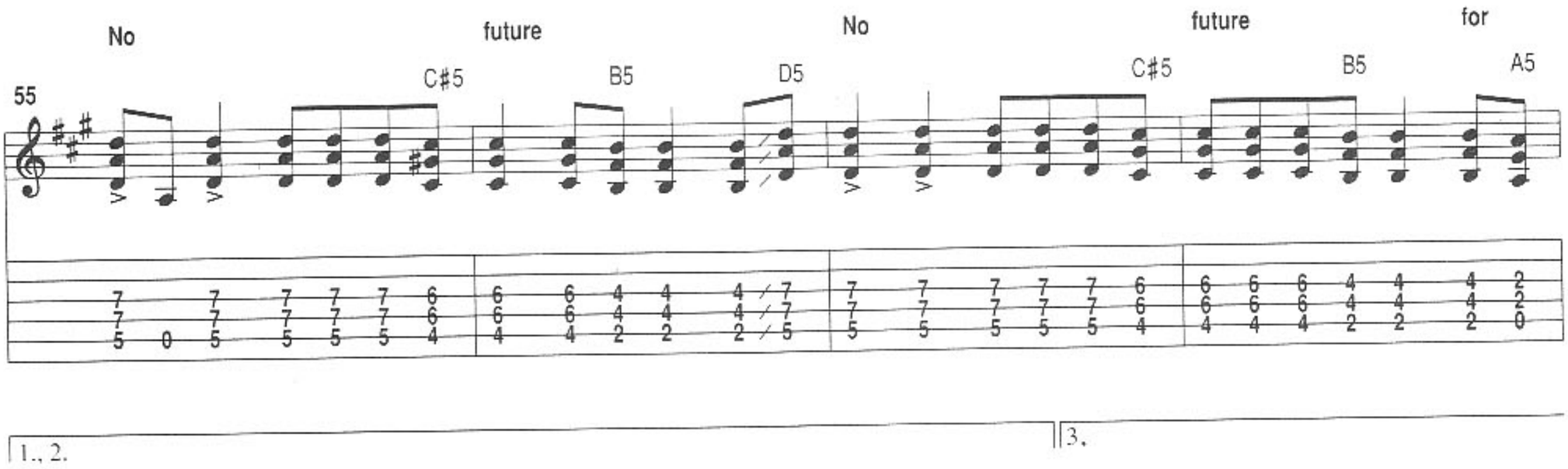


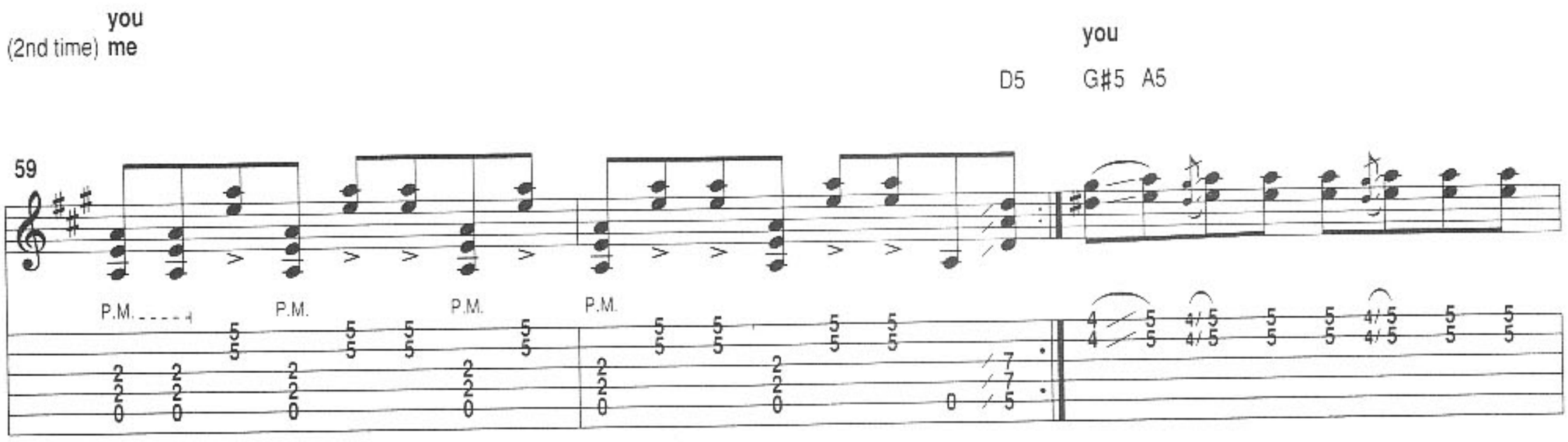
is no future

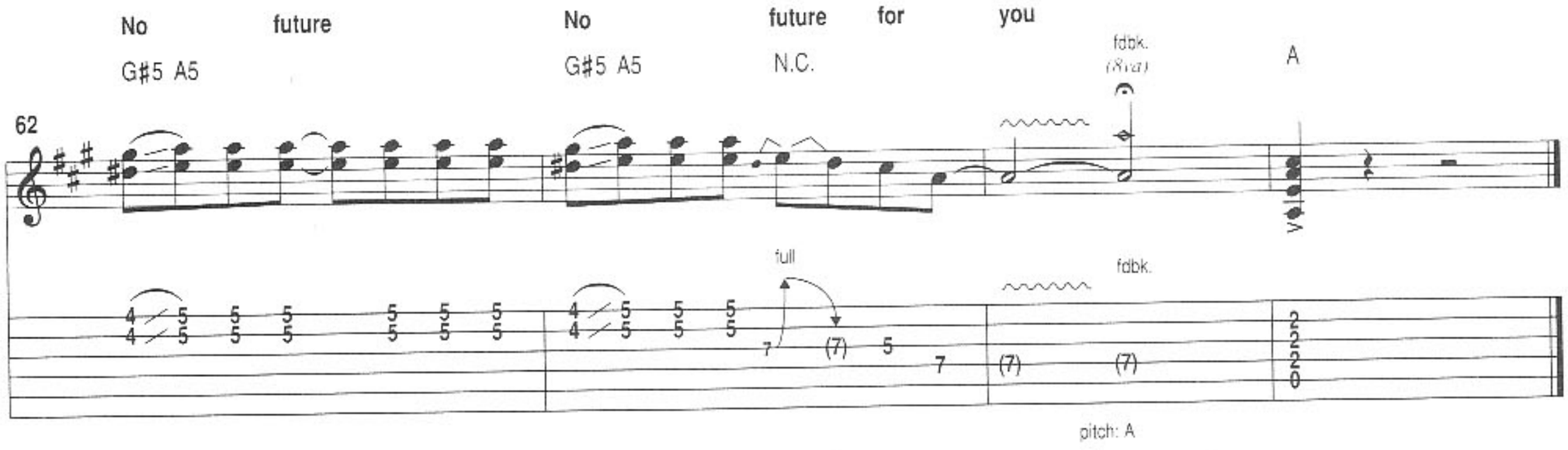
and England's dreamin'




G Outro
No
future
N.C.
D5
C♯5
B5
D5
52
let ring
full


No
future
No
future
for
C♯5
B5
D5
C♯5
B5
A5
55
1., 2.
3.


you
(2nd time) me
you
D5
G♯5 A5
59
P.M.

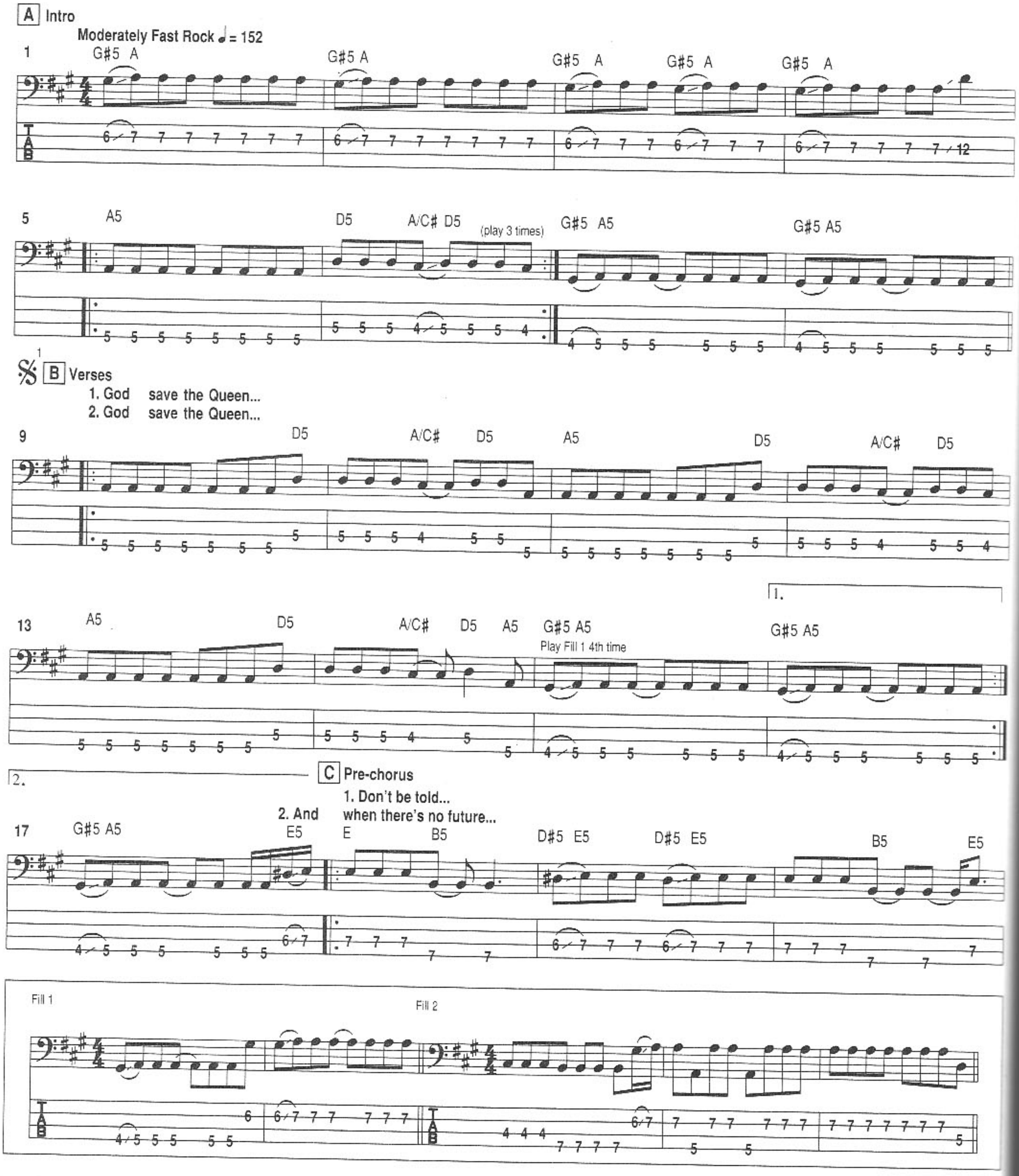

No
future
No
future
for
you
G♯5 A5
G♯5 A5
N.C.
A
62
full
fdbk.
fdbk.
pitch: A

god save the queen

bassline

SEX PISTOLS

WORDS AND MUSIC BY GLEN MATLOCK,
JOHNNY ROTTEN, PAUL COOK AND STEVE JONES
TRANSCRIBED BY DALE TURNER



As heard on the Warner Bros. recording *Never Mind the Bollocks Here's the Sex Pistols*

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god save the queen

SEX PISTOLS

D Chorus (see meas. 26 in the gtr. trans.)

God save the Queen...

21

A5 D5 A/C#

(2nd time) *To Coda I* (3rd time) *To Coda II* *D.S. al Coda*

25

A5 E A5 N.C.

Coda I

E Guitar Solo (see meas. 36 in the gtr. trans.)

29

A5 N.C.(F♯) (B) (play 3 times)

D.S. al Coda II

32

(F♯) E

Coda II

F Outro (see meas. 53 in the gtr. trans.)

No future...

35

D5 C♯5 B5 D5 C♯5

1., 2.

39

B5 D5 C♯5 B5 A5

Play Fill 2 2nd time

3.

43

D5 G♯5 A5 G♯5 A5 G♯5 A5 G♯5 A5

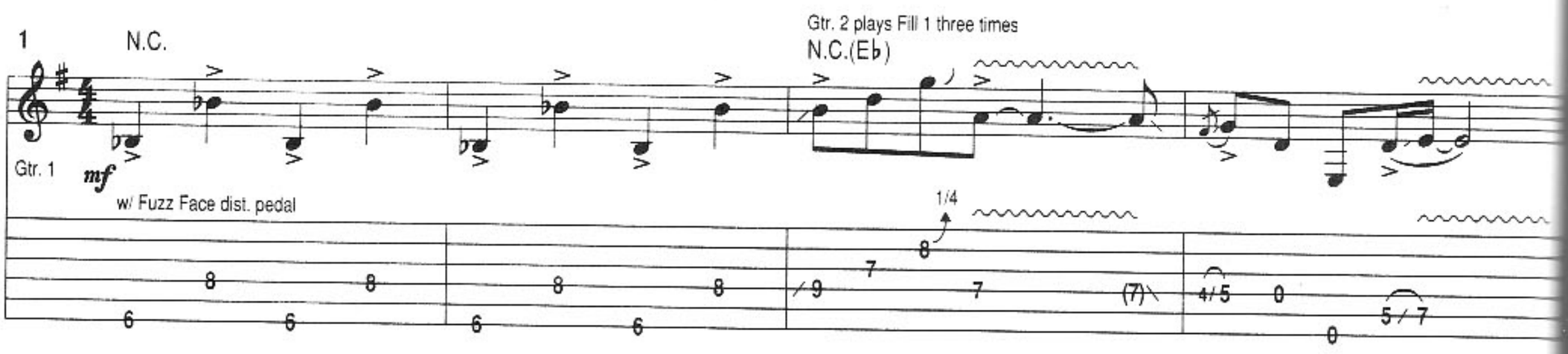
(play 3 times)

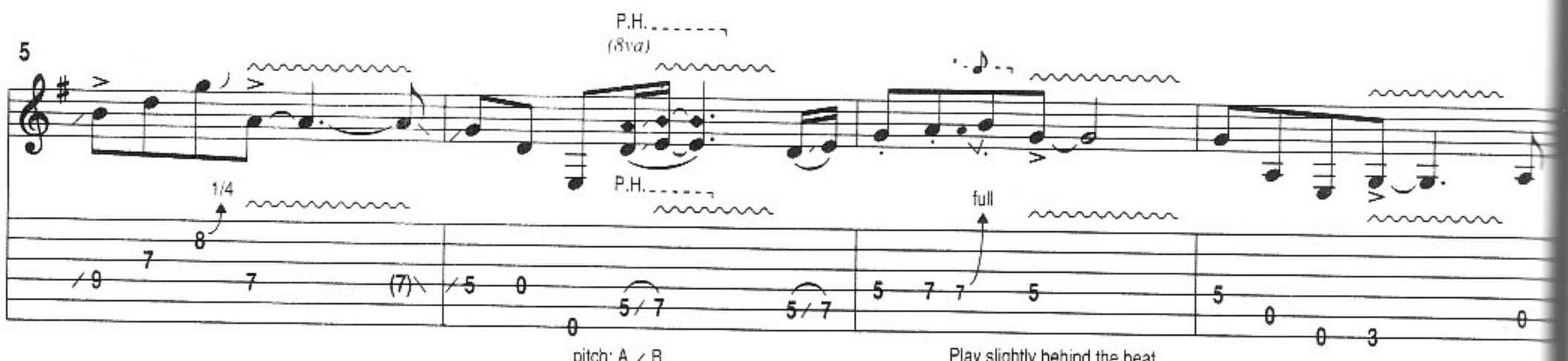
purple haze

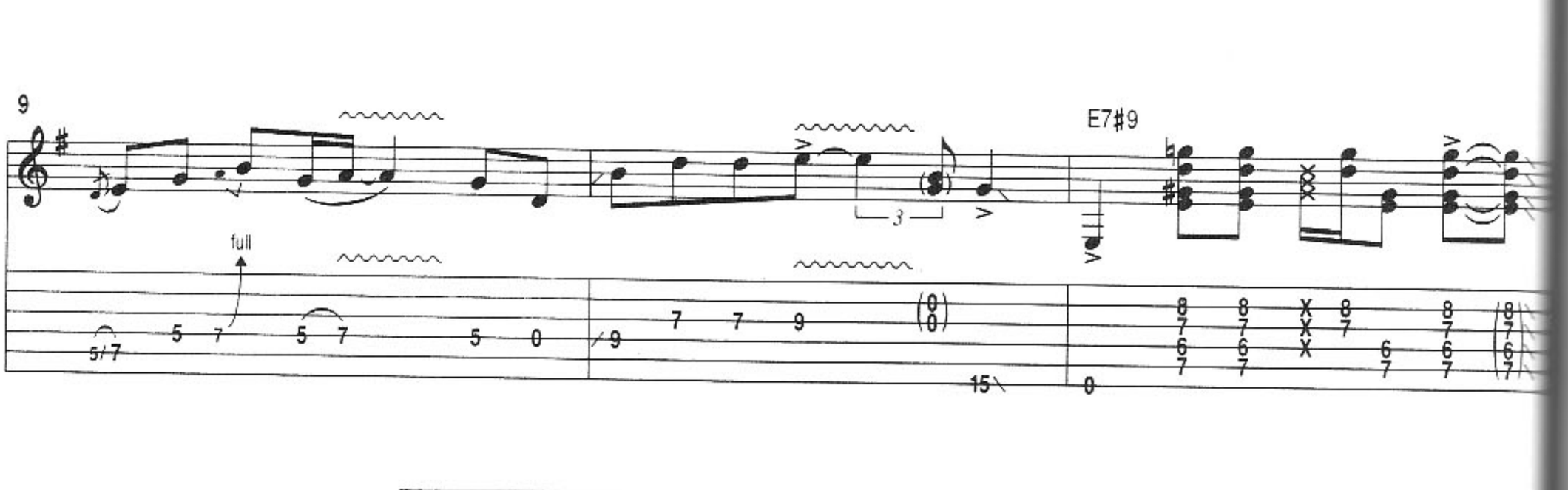
JIMI HENDRIX

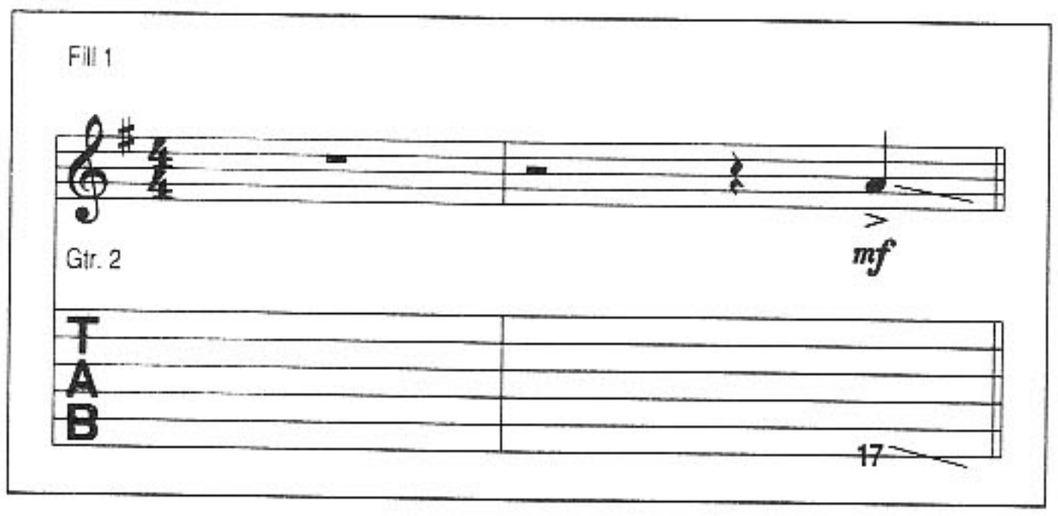
WORDS AND MUSIC BY JIMI HENDRIX
TRANSCRIBED BY ANDY ALEDORT

A Intro
Moderate Rock ♩ = 112









As heard on the Jimi Hendrix Experience's MCA recording *Are You Experienced?*

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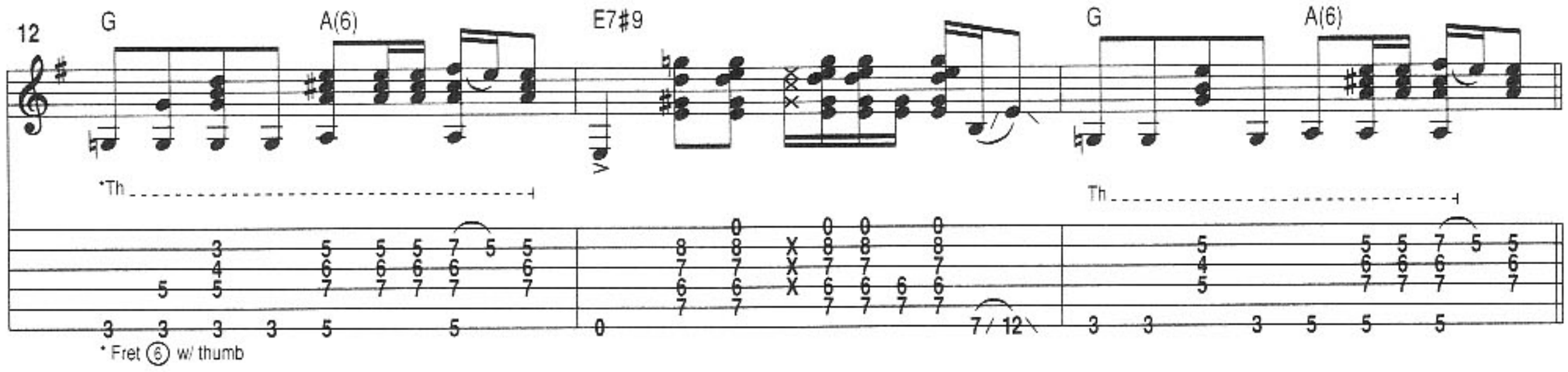
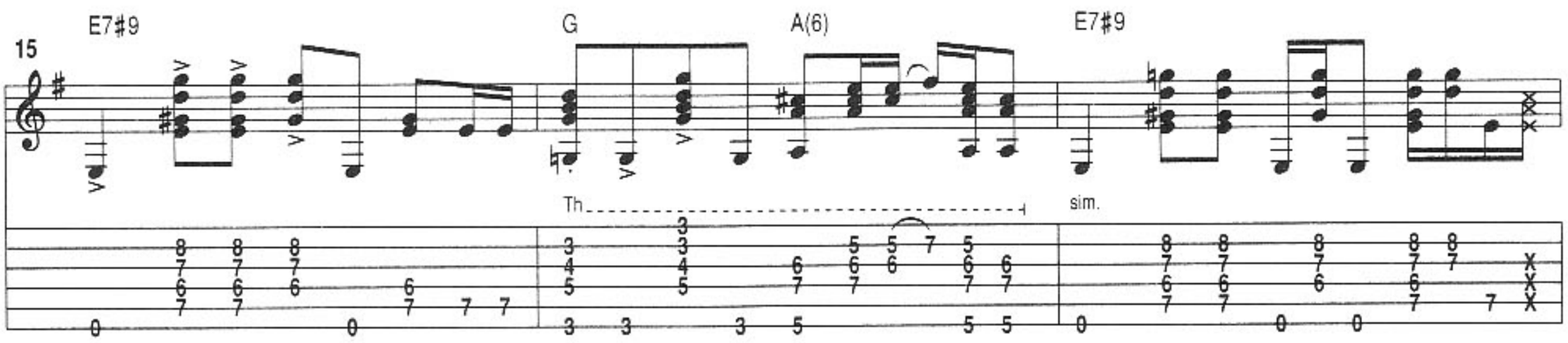
purple haze

JIMI HENDRIX

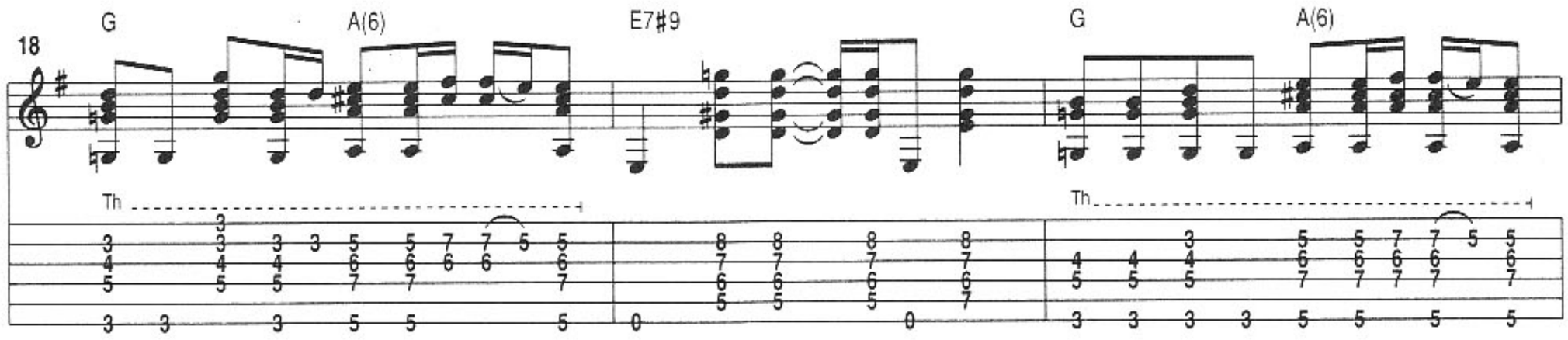


B 1st Verse

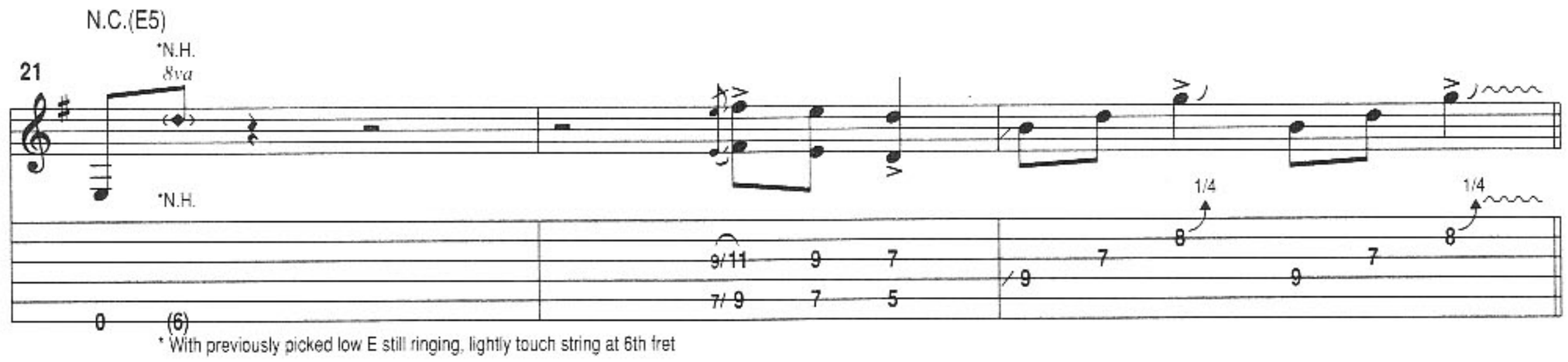
Purple haze all in my brain Lately things just don't



seem the same Actin' funny but I don't know why



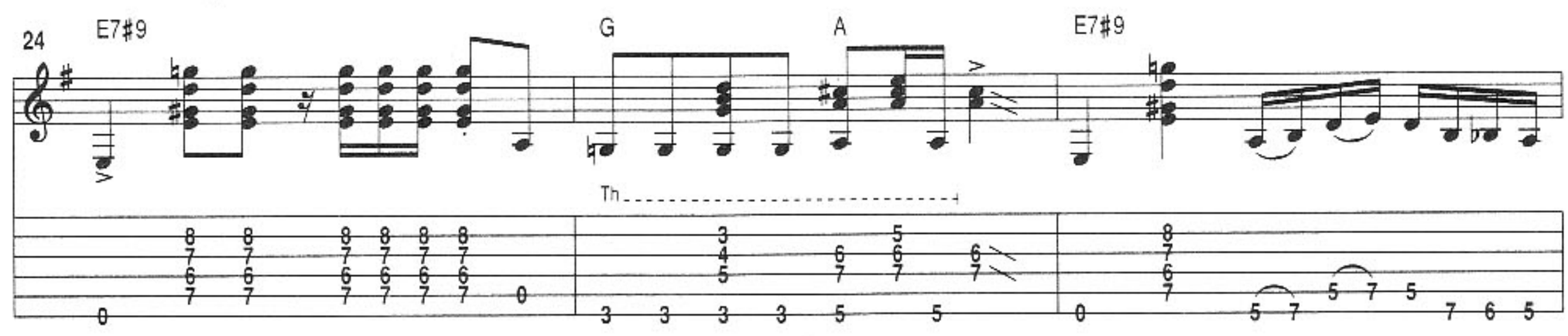
S'cuse me while I kiss the sky



* With previously picked low E still ringing, lightly touch string at 6th fret

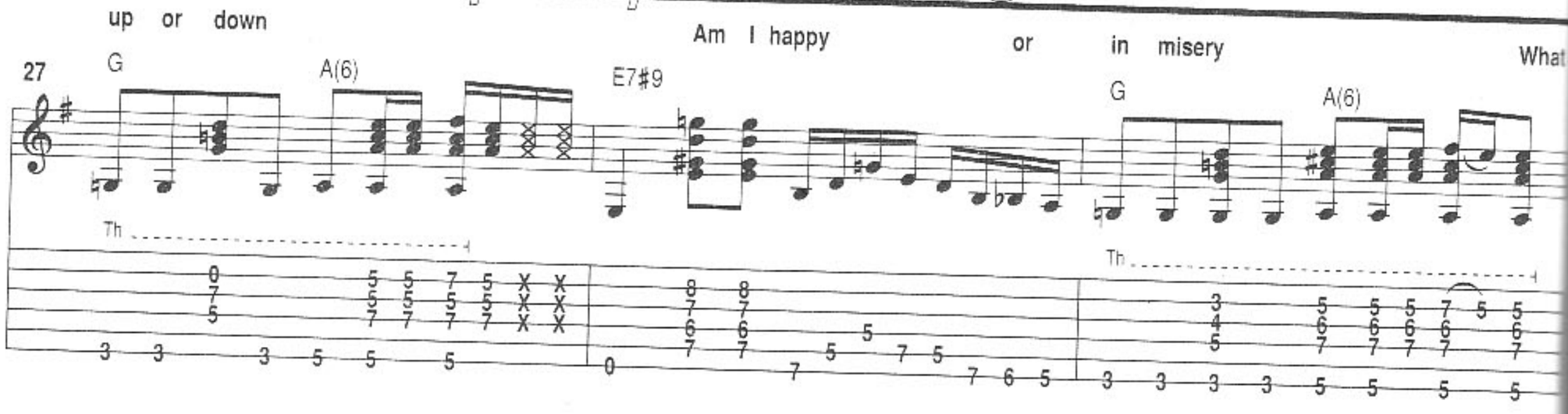
C 2nd Verse

Purple haze all around Don't know if I'm comin'

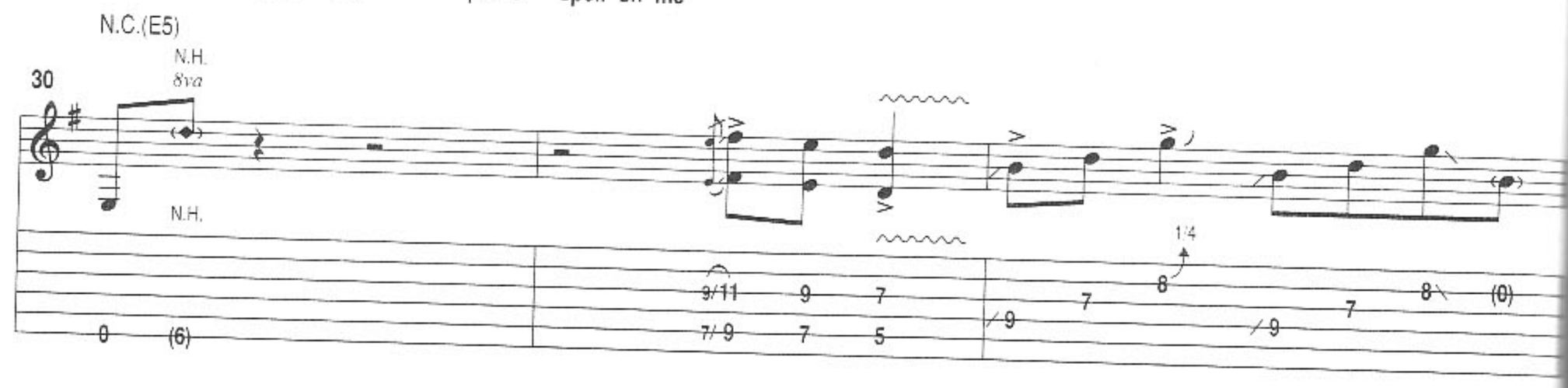


purple haze

JIMI HENDRIX



ever it is that girl put a spell on me



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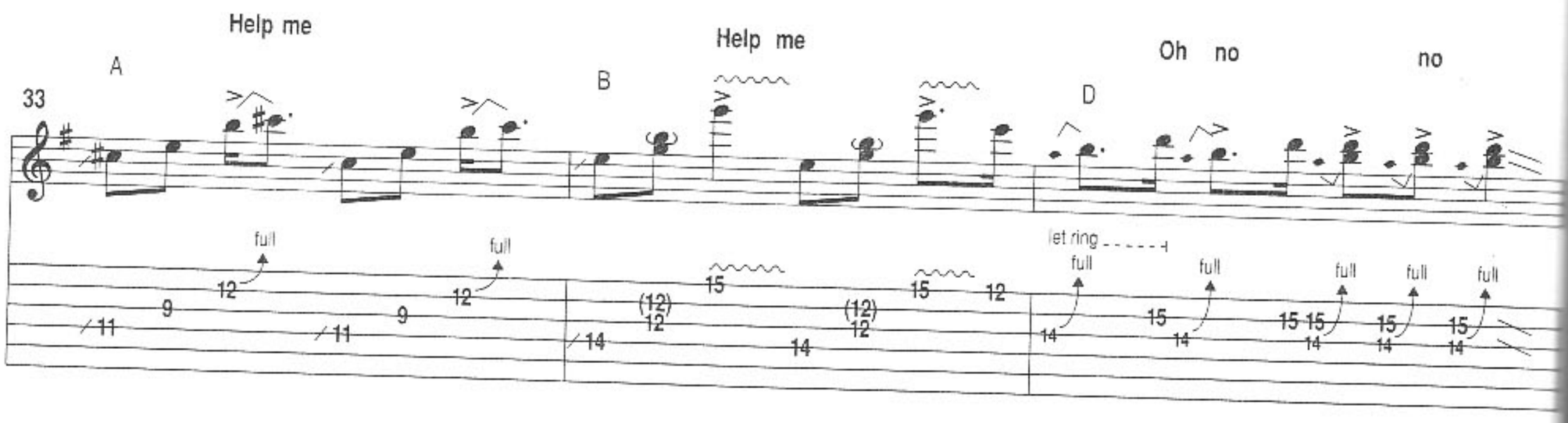


E Guitar Solo (w/ vocal ad lib.)

purple haze

JIMI HENDRIX

F

Oo

Gtr. 2 plays Fill 1 three times

N.C.(E5)

42

(E5) (F♯5) (D5)

Gtr. 1

full full 1/4

Ah Oo Ah

45

Oo Ah Oo

48

1/2 full full 1/2

G 3rd Verse

Ah Yeah Purple haze all in my eyes

51

E7♯9 G A(6)

Th

Don't know if it's day or night You got me blowin'

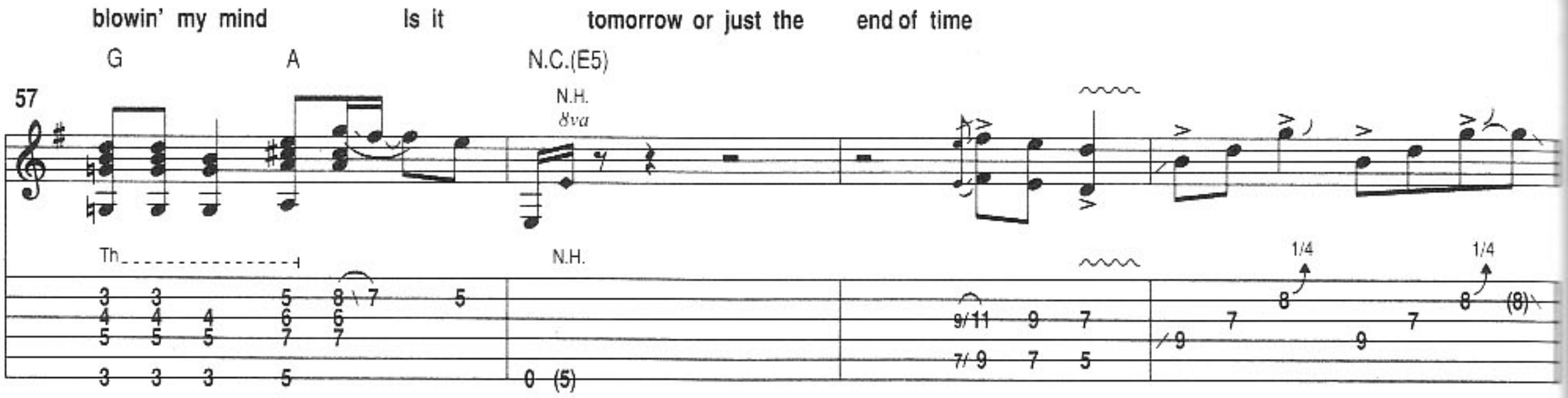
54

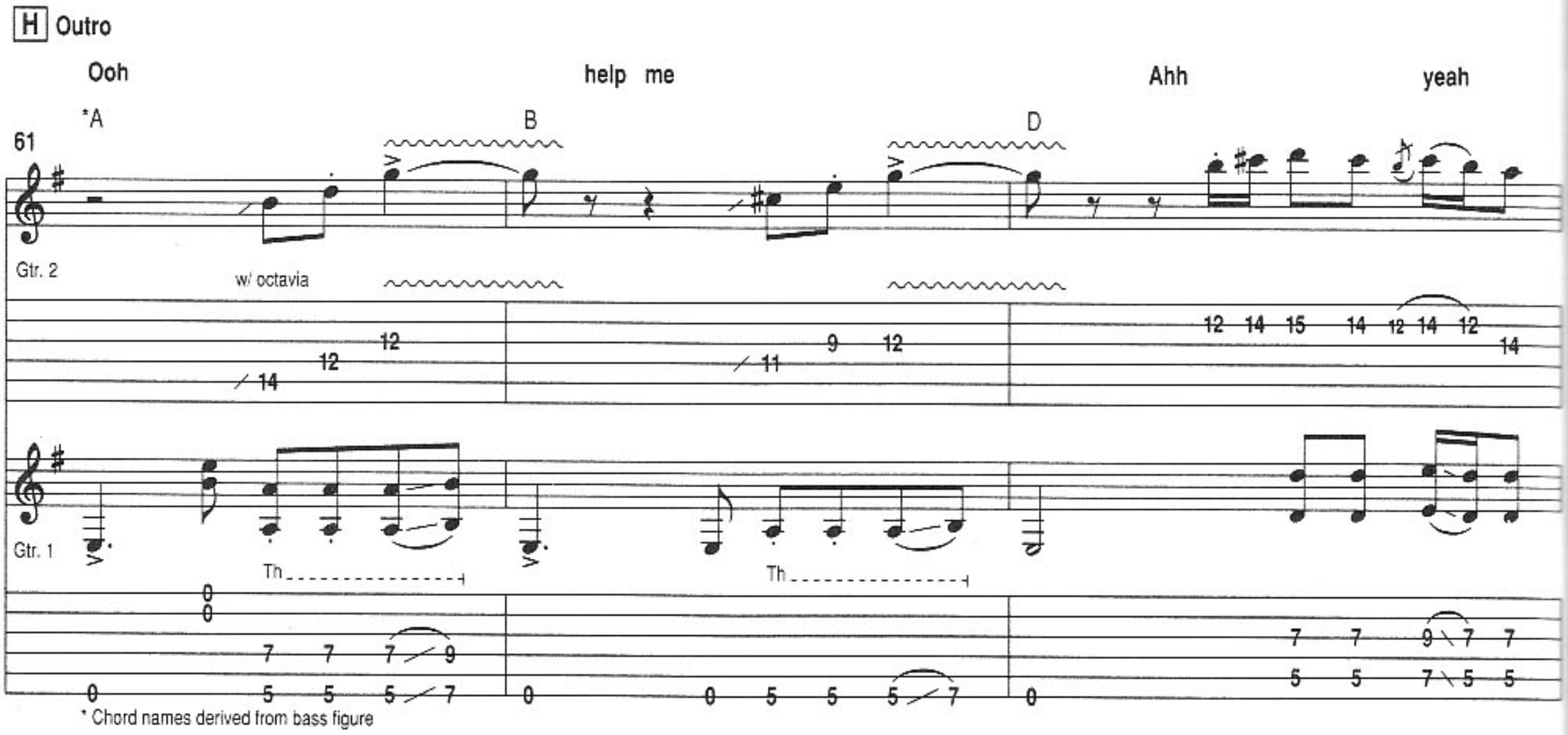
E7♯9 G A(6) E7♯9

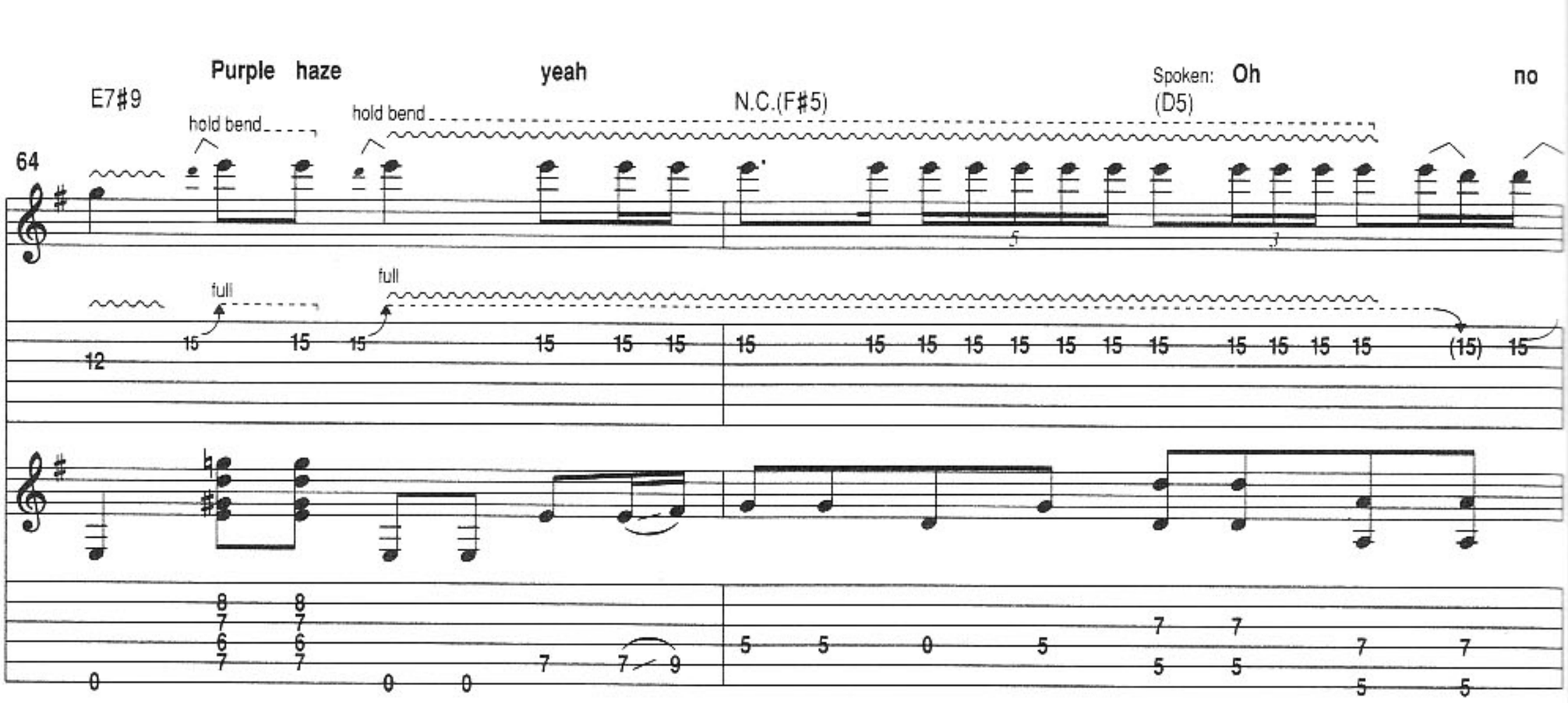
sim. Th

purple haze

JIMI HENDRIX







purple haze

JIMI HENDRIX

no oh help me tell me baby tell me I
(E5) (F#5) (D5) (E5) purple haze

hold bend

Gtr.2 (Gtr.1 continues simile next 4 measures)

Gtr.2

66

* Gtr.1

full

(15) 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15

2 0

* Randomly alternate between the two notes while tremolo picking.

can't go on like this You're makin' me blow my mind
Purple haze
(F#5) (D5) (E5)

69

trem. pick full

15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 (15) 15 15 15 (15)

Mama oh no
Purple haze No no

Gtr. 1 plays ad lib. trem. bar dive & return w/ open strings till fade

(F#5) (D5) (E5) (F#5) (D5)

hold bend hold bend hold bend

71

Gtr. 2

1 1/2 full full full full

15 15 15 15 (15) 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15

Begin Fade
It's painful baby
Purple haze Purple haze Fade Out

(E5) (F#5) (D5) (E5) (F#5) (D5)

hold bend

74

1 1/2 full

15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15

yeah

12 14 12 14

1/4

8 (8)

7

9 7 7

7 5 5

no

(15) 15

7

5

purple haze bassline

JIMI HENDRIX

WORDS AND MUSIC BY JIMI HENDRIX
TRANSCRIBED BY ANDY ALEDORT

A Intro

Moderate Rock ♩= 112

1 N.C. (play 7 times)

Elec. Bass (drums enter)

mf w/pick

5 E7♯9 G A(6) E7♯9 G A6

B Verses

1. Purple haze...
2. Purple haze...
3. Purple haze...

9 E7♯9 G A6 E7♯9 G A6

* w/improvisation on 2nd and 3rd Verses.

13 E7♯9 G A6 N.C.(E5)

1. 2. (2nd time) *To Coda* **C**

Help me...

17 A B

D Guitar Solo (see meas. 36 in the gtr. trans.)

21 D N.C.(E5)

As heard on the Jimi Hendrix Experience's MCA recording *Are You Experienced?*

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purple haze

JIMI HENDRIX

25

D.S. 𝄋 al Coda ⊕
(skip 1st ending)

29

(play 7 times)

⊕ Coda

E Outro (see meas. 61 in the gtr. trans.)

32 A B D E7♯9

36 N.C.(F♯5) (D5) (E5) (F♯5) (D5)

39 (E5) (F♯5) (E5) (F♯5) (D5)

Begin Fade

43 (F♯5) (D5) (E5)

Fade Out

46 (F♯5) (D5) (E5) (F♯5) (D5)

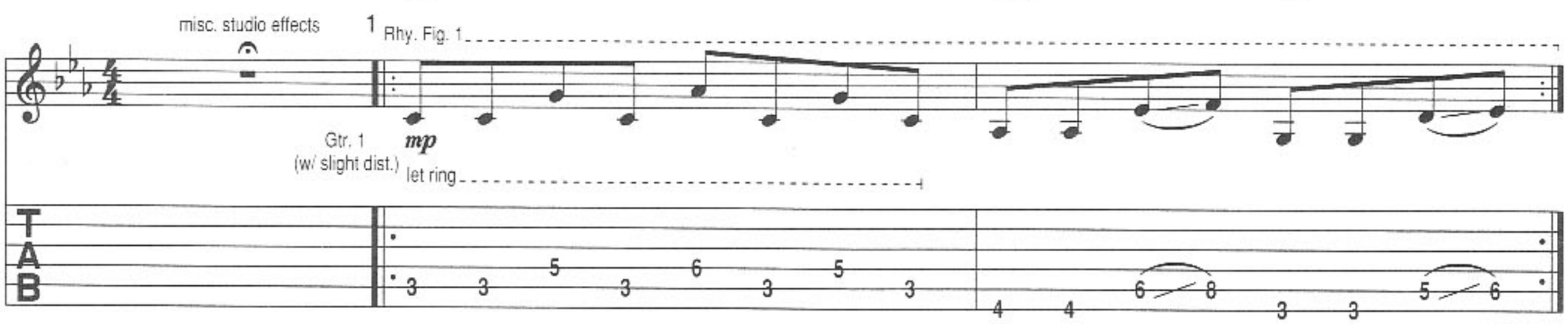
sweet dreams (are made of this)

MARILYN MANSON

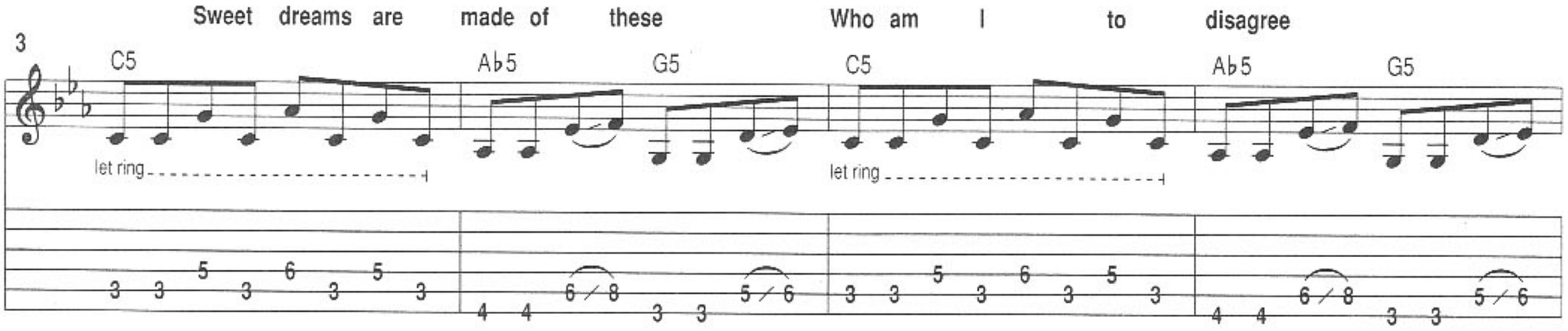
WORDS AND MUSIC BY DAVID A. STEWART AND ANNIE LENNOX
TRANSCRIBED BY DALE TURNER

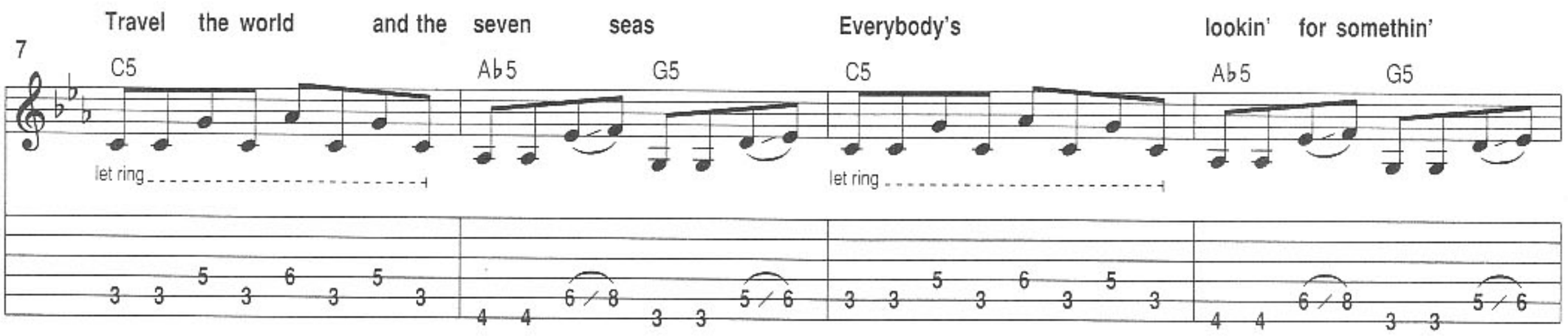
A Intro

Moderately Slow ♩ = 92



B 1st Chorus





As heard on Marilyn Manson's Nothing/Interscope recording *Smells Like Children*

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MARILYN MANSON

sweet dreams (are made of this)

Some of them want to use you

Some of them wanna get used by you

(Bass enters)

C5 Ab5 G5 C5 Ab5 G5

11

Gtr. 2 plays Rhy. Fill 1

let ring

Some of them want to abuse you

Some of them want to be abused

C5 Ab5 G5 C5 Ab5 G5

Rhy. Fig. 2 end Rhy. Fig. 2 Rhy. Fig. 3 end Rhy. Fig. 3

15

Gtr. 4 plays Rhy. Fill 2

let ring

C 1st Interlude

(Drums enter)

Ab G Cm

19

Rhy. Fig. 4

Gtrs. 3 & 4

f

let ring

Ab G5 Ab5 G

22

end Rhy. Fig. 4

let ring

(cont. in Rhy. Fig. 3)

Rhy. Fill 1 C5 Rhy. Fill 2 G5 Ab5

Gtr. 2 (dist.)

Gtr. 4 (dist.)

* *pp* < *mf*

* *pp* < *f*

* Volume swell w/ knob.

* Volume swell w/ knob

sweet dreams (are made of this)

MARILYN MANSON

C5 Ab5 G5

25

Gtrs. 3 & 4 play Rhy. Fill 3

(play 4 times)

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

** (cont. in Fill 1)

* w/ wah

let ring

* + = closed; ° = open

** Last time

D 2nd Chorus

Sweet dreams are made of these Who am I to disagree

C5 Ab5 G5 C5 Ab5 G5

27

Gtr. 2 plays Fill 1

Gtr. 1

let ring let ring

Travel the world and the seven seas Everybody's lookin' for somethin'

C5 Ab5 G5 C5 Ab5 G5

31

let ring let ring

Rhy. Fill 3 (G5) Fill 1 fdbk. (15ma)

Gtrs. 3 & 4 Gtr. 2

w/ bar fdbk.

-1/2 -1

sweet dreams (are made of this)

Some of them want to use you

C5 A♭5 G5

Some of them wanna get used by you

C5 A♭5 G5

35

Gtrs. 3 & 4 play Rhy. Fig. 2 three times

let ring

let ring

Some of them want to abuse you

C5 A♭5 G5

Some of them want to be abused

C5 A♭5 G5

Gtrs. 3 & 4 play Rhy. Fig. 3

Gtr. 2 plays Rhy. Fill 2

39

let ring

let ring

E 2nd Interlude

A♭ G Cm

Gtrs. 3 & 4 play Rhy. Fig. 4

43

Gtr. 2

1/2

you I wanna know what's inside

A♭ G5 A♭5 G5 C5

Gtrs. 3 & 4 play Rhy. Fill 4

46

1/2

Fill 2

tdbk.

8va

w/ wah

tdbk.

Rhy. Fill 4

G5 C5

Gtr. 2

Gtrs. 3 & 4

(cont. in slash)

sweet dreams (are made of this)

MARILYN MANSON

you Movin' on (Hold your head up) Movin' on (Keep your head up) Movin' on (Hold your head up) Movin' on

C5 Ab5 C5 Ab5 C5

Gtrs. 3 & 4

mf

49

fdbk. 8va

fdbk. w/ bar -1/2

fdbk. 8va

fdbk. w/ bar

fdbk. 15ma

fdbk. w/ bar

fdbk. 8va

w/ bar

(Keep your head up) Movin' on (Hold your head up) Movin' on (Keep your head up) Movin' on

Ab5 C5 Ab5

53

fdbk. 15ma

fdbk. 8va

fdbk. 8va

fdbk. 8va

fdbk. +1/2 -1/2

fdbk. w/ bar

fdbk. w/ bar

grad. dive w/ bar -1/2

F Guitar Solo

C5 Ab5 G5 C5 Ab5 G5

Gtr. 1 plays Rhy. Fig. 1 four times

57

grad. bend

full 1/2 1/2 1/2 1/2

C5 Ab5 G5 C5 Ab5 G5

61

grad. bend grad. release

let ring

1/2 1/2 1/4 full 1/2

sweet dreams (are made of this)

MARILYN MANSON

G 3rd Chorus

Sweet dreams are made of these — Who am I to disagree

N.C.(Cm) (Ab) (G) (Cm) (Ab) (G)

Gtr. 2 plays Fill 3

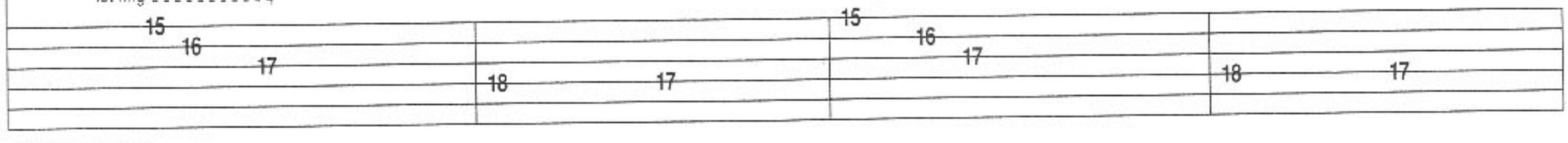
65

8va

* Gtr. 5

mp

let ring



* Kybd. arr. for gtr.

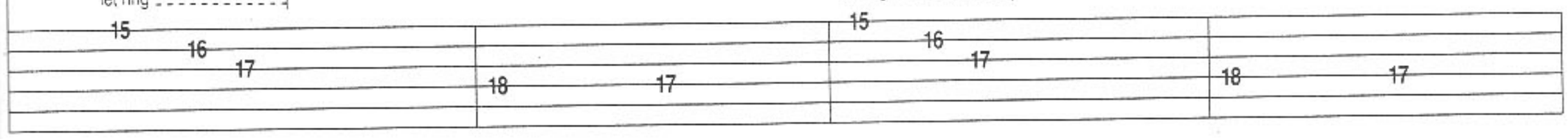
Travel the world and the seven seas — Everybody lookin' for somethin'

(Cm) (Ab) (G) (Cm) (Ab) (G)

69

8va

let ring



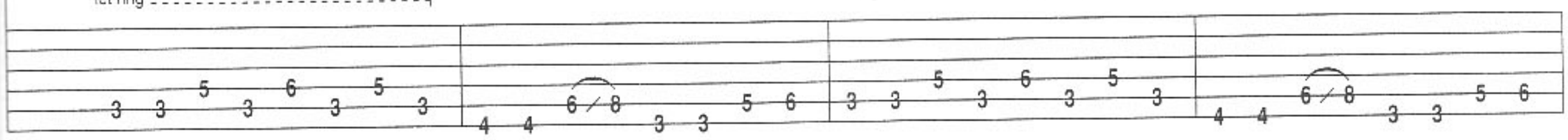
Some of them want to use you — Some of them wanna get used by you

C5 Ab5 G5 C5 Ab5 G5

73

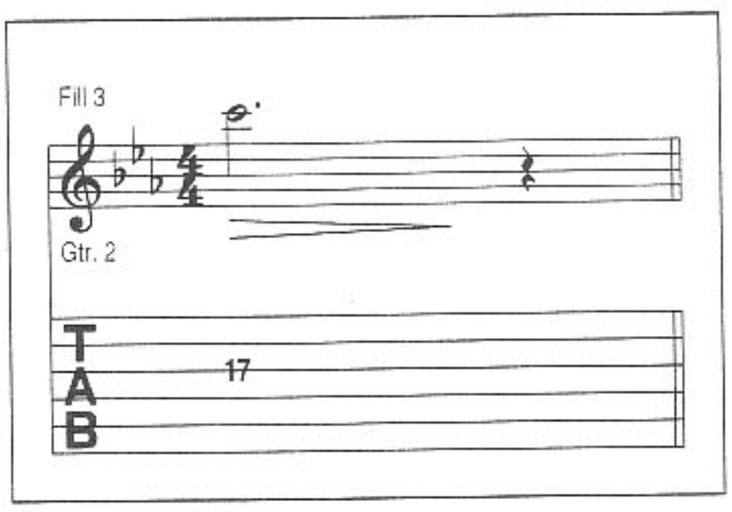
Gtr. 3 plays Rhy. Fig. 2 three times

let ring — let ring



Fill 3

Gtr. 2



sweet dreams (are made of this)

Some of them want to abuse you

C5 Ab5 G5

77

Gtr. 4 plays Rhy. Fig. 2

let ring

Some of them want to be abused

C5 Ab5 G5

Gtrs. 3 & 4 play Rhy. Fig. 3

let ring

H Outro

I'm gonna use you

Ab G Cm Ab G5

81

Gtrs. 3 & 4 play Rhy. Fig. 4

Gtr. 2

1/2 1/2 1/2

and abuse you I gotta know what's inside

Ab5 G G5 (type2)

84

Gtrs. 3 & 4

1/2 1/2 1/2

Gonna use you and abuse you I gotta know what's inside you

Ab5 (type2) G5 C5 (type2) Ab5 G5 C5 (type3)

87

† fdbk.

8va

rit.

* fdbk.

w/ random microphonic fdbk.

1/2 1/2 1/4

* microphonic fdbk. † fdbk. pitch: E

sweet dreams (are made of this)

bassline

MARILYN MANSON

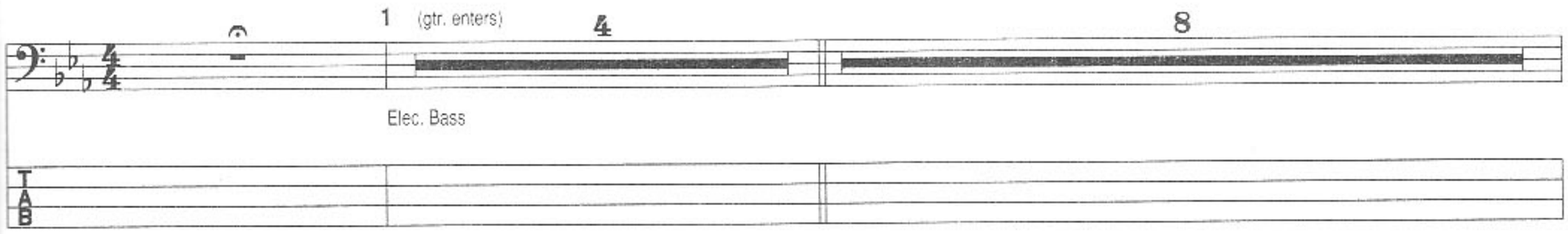
WORDS AND MUSIC BY DAVID A. STEWART AND ANNIE LENNOX
TRANSCRIBED BY DALE TURNER

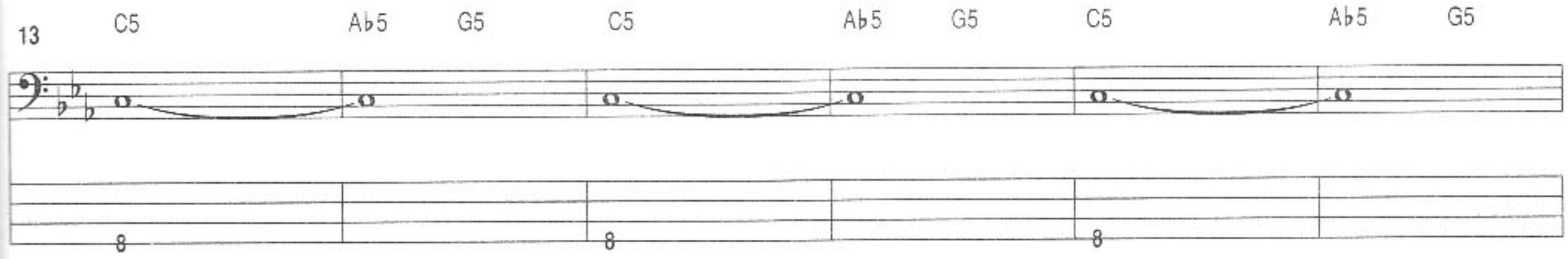
A Intro

Moderately Slow Rock ♩ = 92

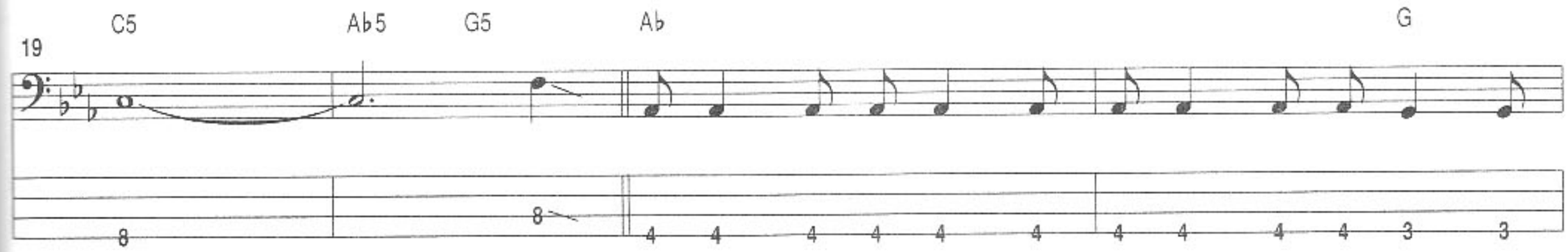
B 1st Chorus

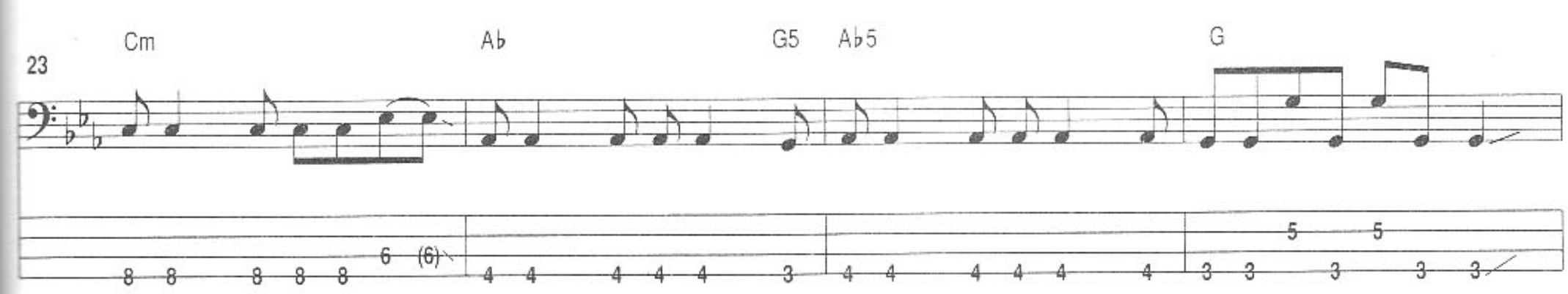
Sweet dreams...





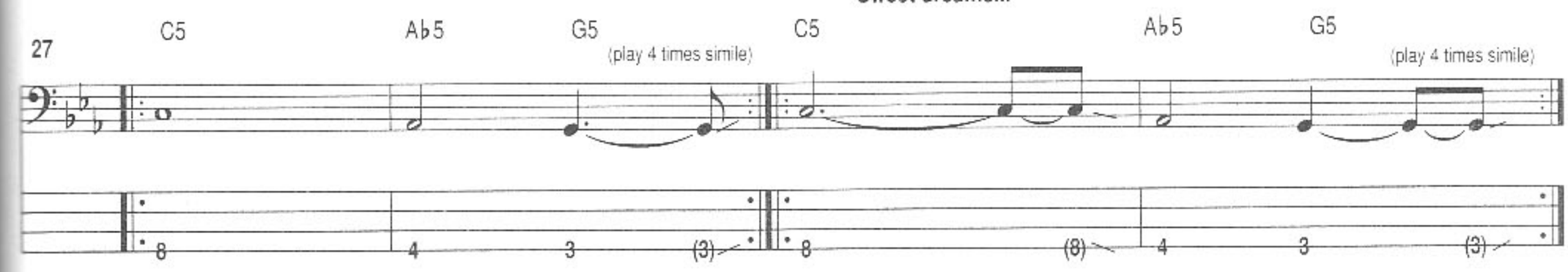
C 1st Interlude (see meas. 19 in the gtr. trans.)





D 2nd Chorus (see meas. 27 in the gtr. trans.)

Sweet dreams...



As heard on Marilyn Manson's Nothing/Interscope recording *Smells Like Children*

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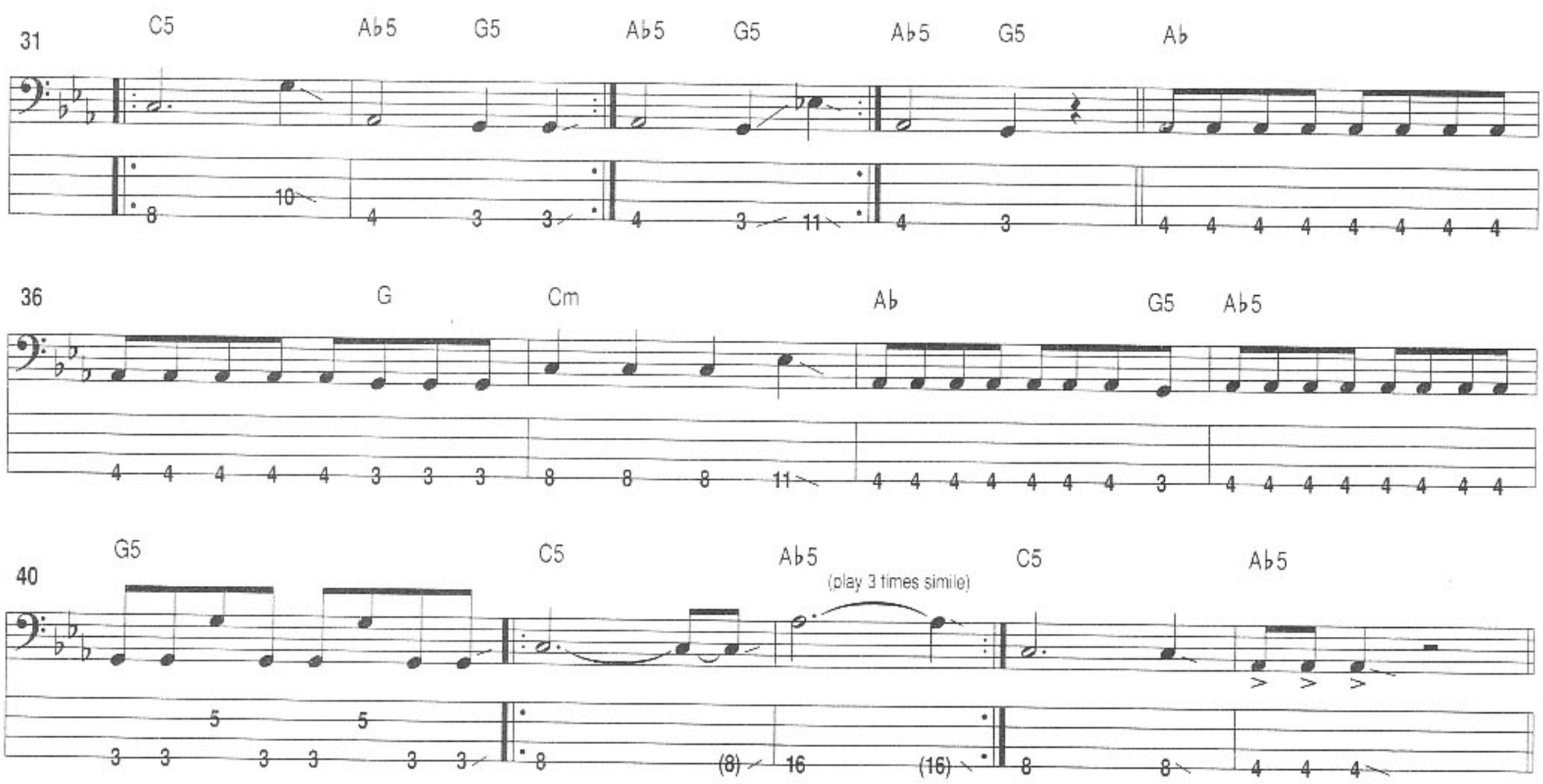
sweet dreams (are made of this)

MARILYN MANSON

E **2nd Interlude** (see meas. 43 in the gtr. trans.)



F **Guitar Solo** (see meas. 57 in the gtr. trans.)

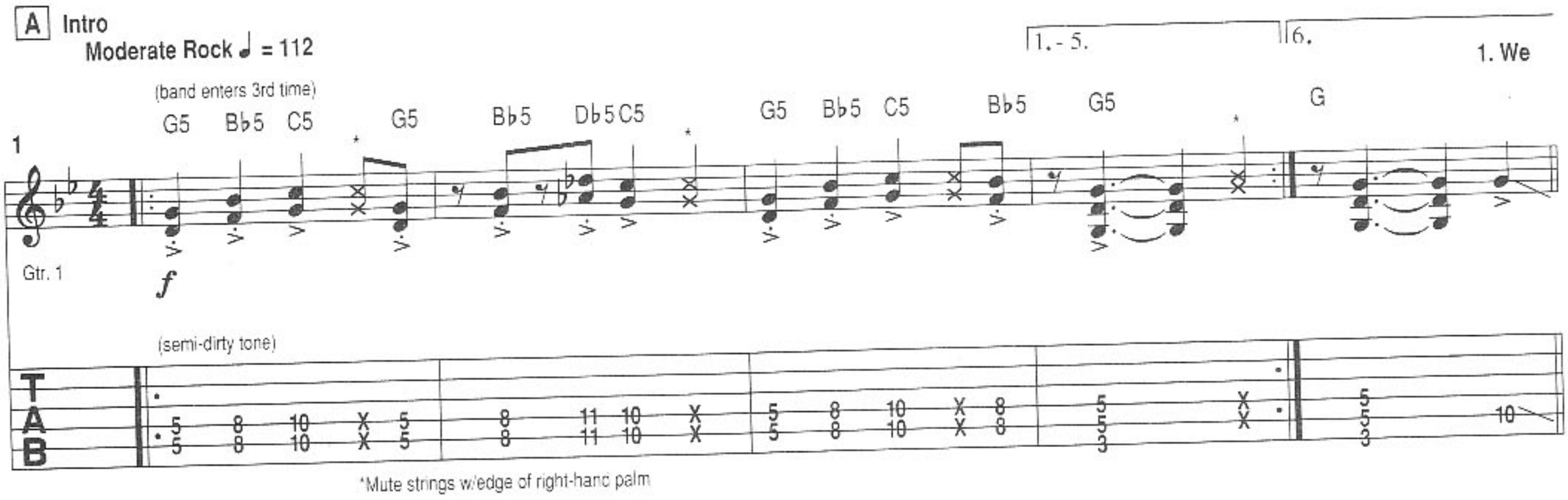
G **3rd Chorus** (see meas. 65 in the gtr. trans.)
Sweet dreams...

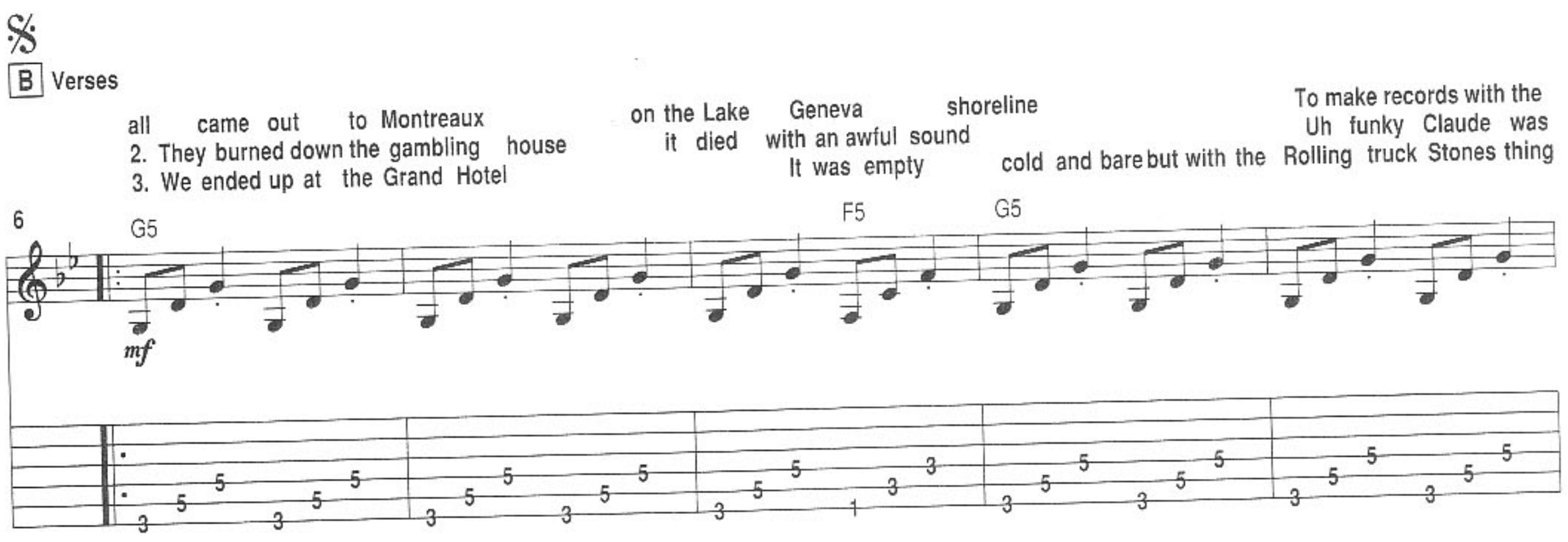
H **Outro** (see meas. 81 in the gtr. trans.)

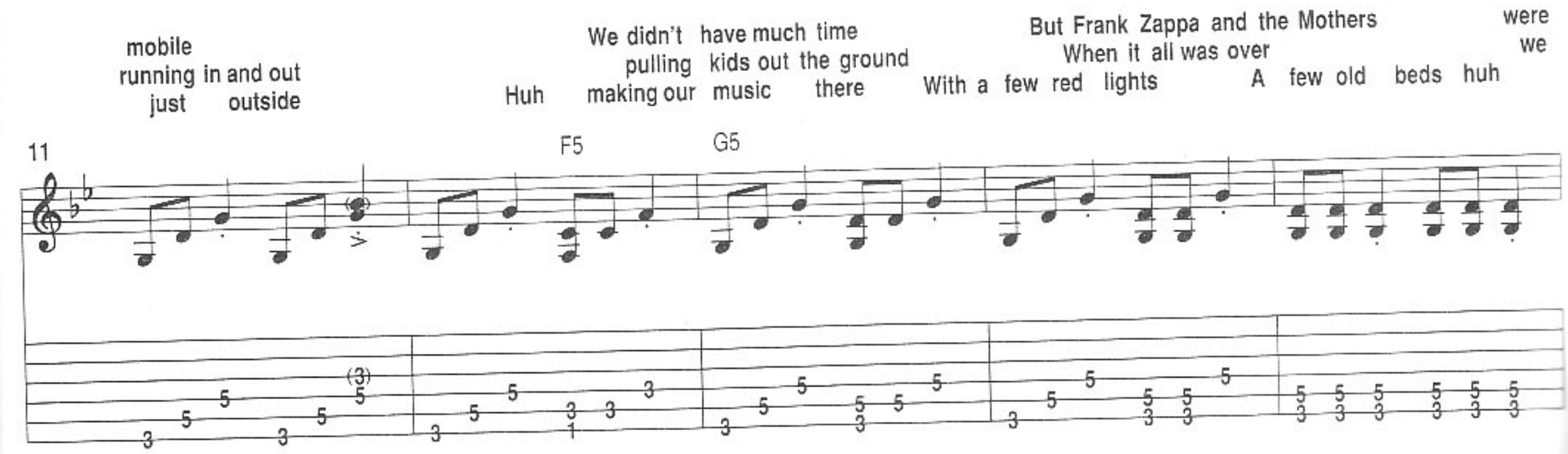
smoke on the water

DEEP PURPLE

WORDS AND MUSIC BY RITCHIE BLACKMORE, IAN GILLAN,
ROGER GLOVER, JON LORD AND IAN PAICE
TRANSCRIBED BY ANDY ALEDORT







As heard on Deep Purple's Warner Bros. recording *Machine Head*

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smoke on the water

DEEP PURPLE

at the best place around
had to find another place
We made a place to sweat

But some stupid with a flare gun burned the place to the ground
But Swiss time was running out It seemed that we would lose the race
No matter what we get out of this huh I know I know we'll never forget

16

F5 G5 F5 G5

Gtr. 1 plays Rhy. Fill 1 third time

C Chorus

(3rd time) *To Coda*

Smoke on the water A fire in the sky Smoke on the water

22

C5 Ab5 N.C.(G5) C5 Ab5

f

let ring let ring let ring let ring let ring

28

G5 Bb5 C5 G5 Bb5 Db5 C5 G5 Bb5 C5 Bb5 G5

*Mute strings w/edge of right-hand palm.

32

G5 Bb5 C5 G5 Bb5 Db5 C5 G5 Bb5 C5 Bb5 1. G

*Mute strings w/edge of R.H.

Rhy. Fill 1

Gtr. 1

P.M.

D Guitar Solo

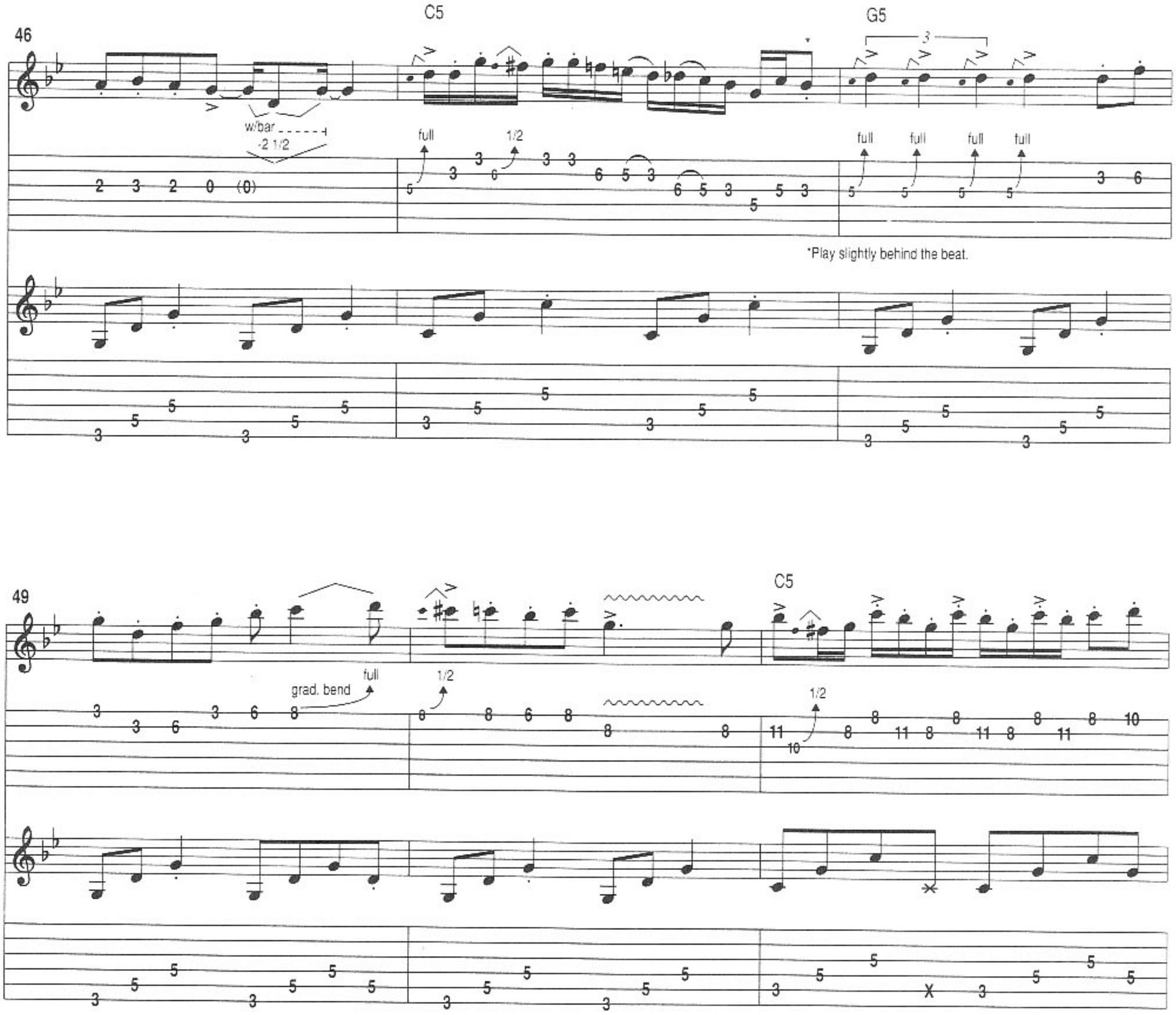
2.
36
G5
C5
(neck picking)
f
Gtr. 2
full
1/4
(wide vib.)
1/2
full
Gtr. 1
mf

40
G5
full
1/4
full
full
full
full

43
C5
G5
full
full

smoke on the water

DEEP PURPLE



smoke on the water

DEEP PURPLE

F5 Fsus2 G5 B♭5 C5 G5

55

hold bend hold bend

full full 1/4 1/2

(bridge pickup) full grad. release 1/2

*This bend is just shy of a pure whole step.

(steady gliss.)

B♭5 D♭5 C5 G5 B♭5 C5 B♭5 G5

58

1/4 full

*Mute strings w/edge of right-hand palm.

D.S. 𝄋 al Coda ⊕

G5 B♭5 C5 G5 B♭5 D♭5 C5 G5 B♭5 C5 B♭5 G

61

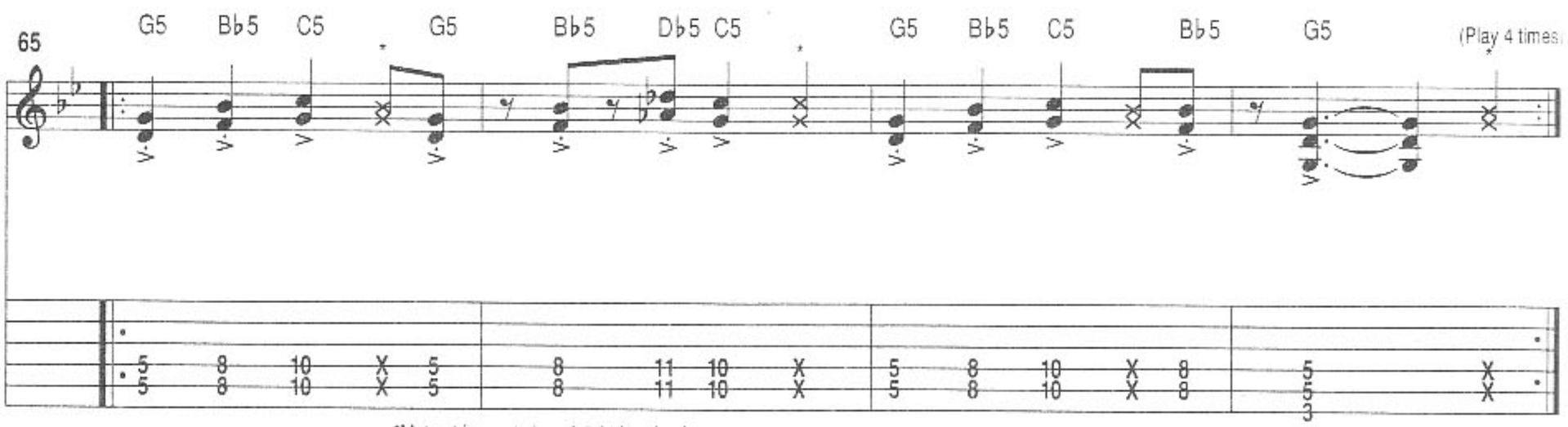
Gtr. 1

*Mute strings w/edge of R.H.

smoke on the water

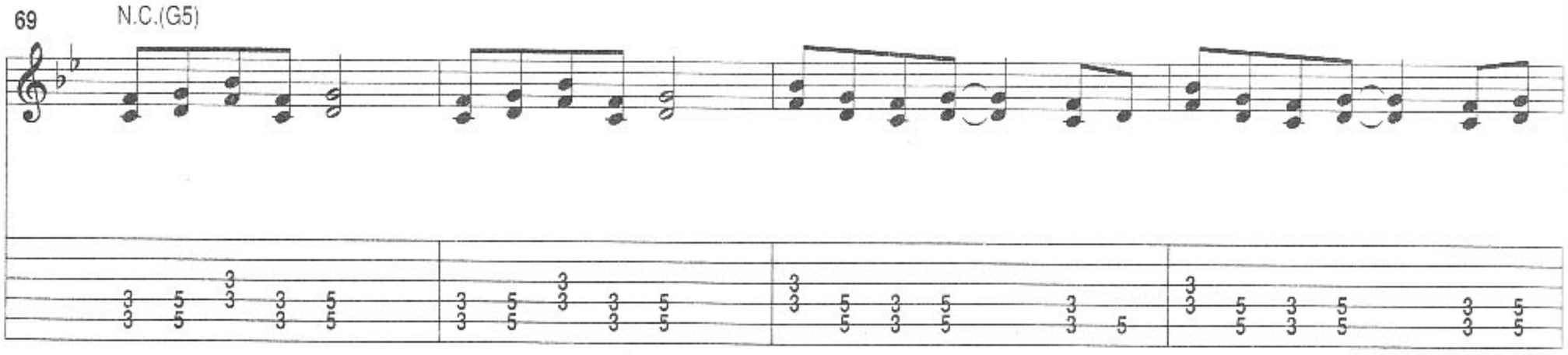
DEEP PURPLE

Coda

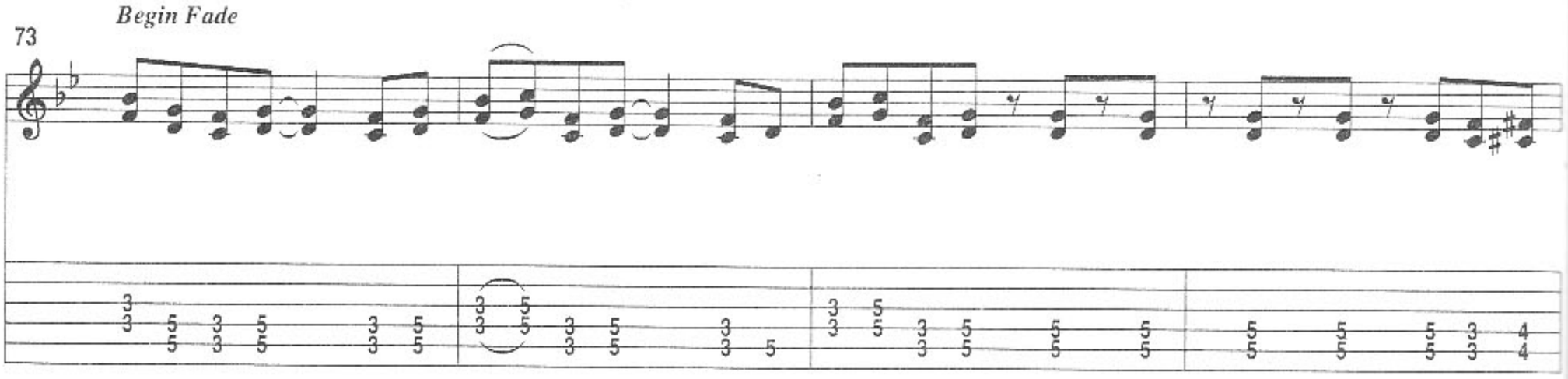


*Mute strings w/edge of right-hand palm.

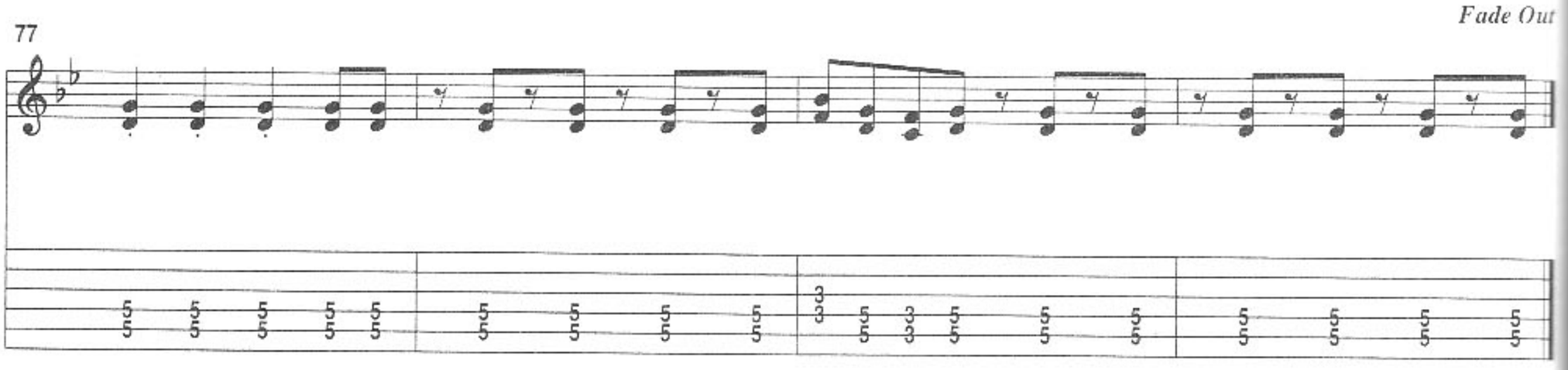
E Outro (Organ Solo)



Begin Fade



Fade Out

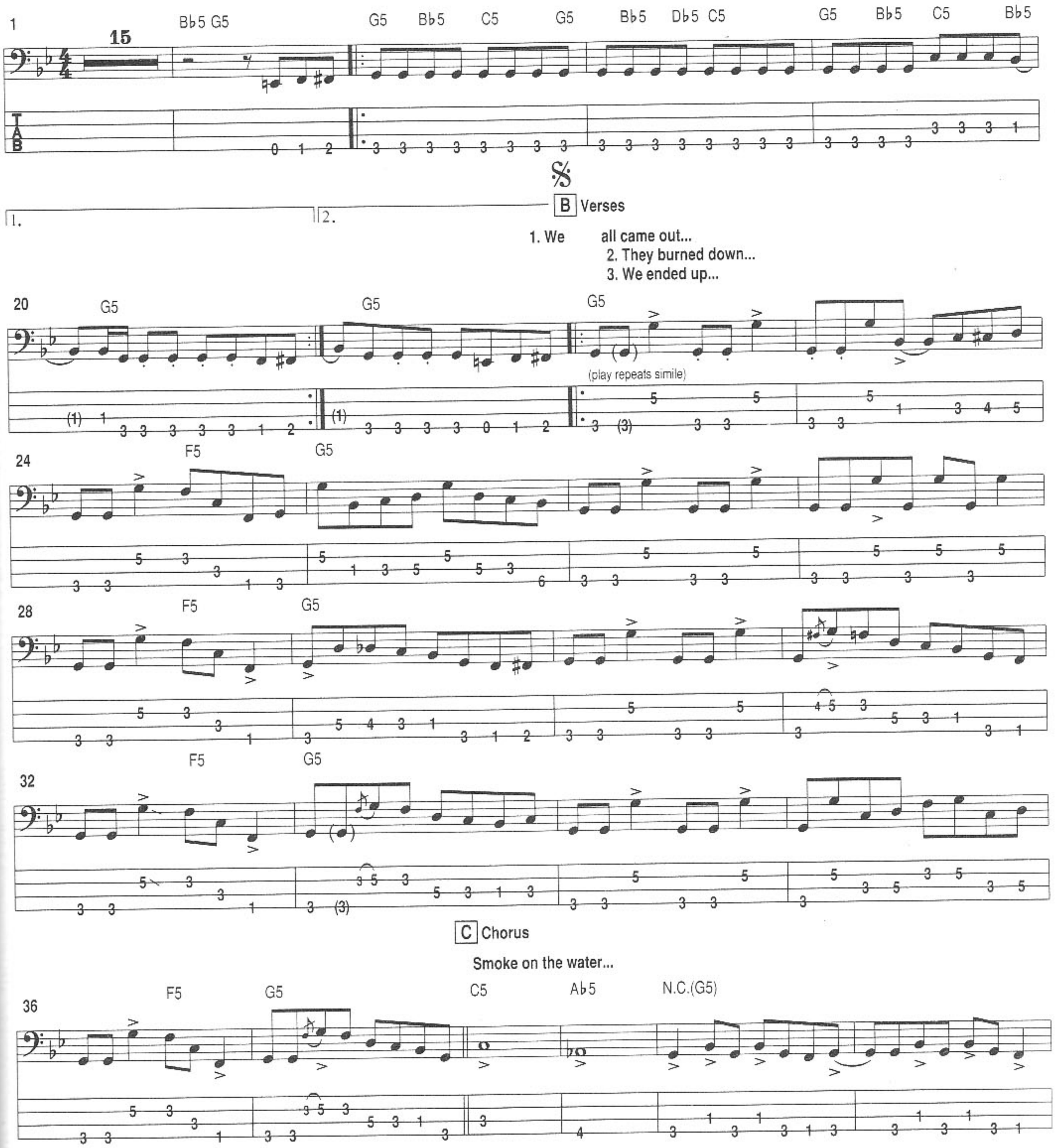


smoke on the water

bassline

DEEP PURPLE

WORDS AND MUSIC BY RITCHIE BLACKMORE, IAN GILLAN,
ROGER GLOVER, JON LORD AND IAN PAICE
TRANSCRIBED BY ANDY ALEDORT



As heard on Deep Purple's Warner Bros. recording *Machine Head*

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smoke on the water

DEEP PURPLE

1.

(3rd time) *To Coda*

42 C5 Ab5 G5 Bb5 C5 G5 Bb5 Db5 C5

46 G5 Bb5 C5 Bb5 G5 Bb5 C5 G5 Bb5 Db5 C5

2.

50 G5 Bb5 C5 Bb5 G5 Bb5 Db5 C5 G5 Bb5 C5 Bb5

54 G5 Bb5 C5 G5 Bb5 Db5 C5 G5 Bb5 C5 Bb5

D Guitar Solo

58 G5 C5

62 G5 C5

66 G5 C5

smoke on the water

DEEP PURPLE

70 G5 C5

74 G5 C5 F5 G5 B♭5 C5 G5

80 B♭5 D♭5 C5 G5 B♭5 C5 B♭5 G5 B♭5 C5 G5

simile

D.S. 𝄋 *al Coda* ⊕

84 B♭5 D♭5 C5 G5 B♭5 C5 B♭5 G5

⊕ *Coda*

1.

87 G5 B♭5 C5 G5 B♭5 D♭5 C5 G5 B♭5 C5 B♭5 G5

2.

1.

91 G5 G5 B♭5 C5 G5 B♭5 D♭5 C5 G5 B♭5 C5 B♭5 G5

2.

E Outro

96 G5 N.C.(G5)

(play 3 times simile and fade out)

side EFFECTS

by Ritchie Fliegler

Picking the best signal processors for your needs.

A FEW MONTHS BACK your humble servant admitted that he suffered from effectosis. Apparently, my confession touched a nerve somewhere because since then I have been inundated with questions regarding signal processors. Most of the inquiries were a little too technical and specific to deal with here, but Tim from East Windsor, New Jersey, raised a topic that is at the heart of the seemingly endless effects debate. "I want to buy some effects, but I'm on a limited budget," writes Tim. "I have noticed that many guitarists use individual rack-mounted effects instead of multi-effects processors. Why do most pros prefer using individual processors?"

Well, Timmy boy, there are three basic types of effects units: multi-effects, which, as the name implies, perform more than one function; single-effect rack units; and single-effect stomp boxes. Pro and amateur guitarists use all three types, each of which has distinct advantages and disadvantages.

Multi-effects processors offer the most versatile tone-shaping capabilities for the money. They provide a wide variety of sounds that can be accessed in an instant, and most offer a dizzying array of choruses, echoes, reverbs, distortions, tremolos, etc. Many are totally configurable, meaning that any effect can be placed anywhere in the signal chain. Multi-effects come in rack-mounted boxes, floor-controller units or pocket-sized packages.

The downside to all this versatility is that the quality and flexibility of the individual effects are often compromised. The onboard processors that are used to create the sounds in a multi-effects unit are often the same as or similar to the ones used in dedicated processors, and the computers that run these mighty gadgets can only do so much at one time. The less the processors have to do, the better they do it. Some units (usually the more expensive ones) allocate more processing power to the effects that are in use instead of wasting it on effects that are turned off. If you're not among the pickiest of the picky, the trade-offs needed to make a multi-effects unit work may not bother or even be apparent to you.

If you're particular about your tone, however, you may want to consider using individual effects, since multi-effects processors may be good for certain applications but lousy for others. For example, a certain unit may have excellent reverbs but wimpy chorus effects. For this reason, pro players and recording studios tend to use single-function rack effects. To create echoes that are truly seamless and pure, reverb that doesn't "pixilate" and chorus without "grit," you need an intense amount of computing power.

There is no sonic downside to these mega-powered one-trick ponies. However, single-function units often cost thousands of dollars. Most are designed for use in recording studios, so they usually don't interface directly with a guitar-level signal. To duplicate the effects found on a multi-effects unit, you'll need a huge rack, a sophisticated controller and an engineering degree to program everything to work together. But if you overcome these hurdles you'll have the best of the best.

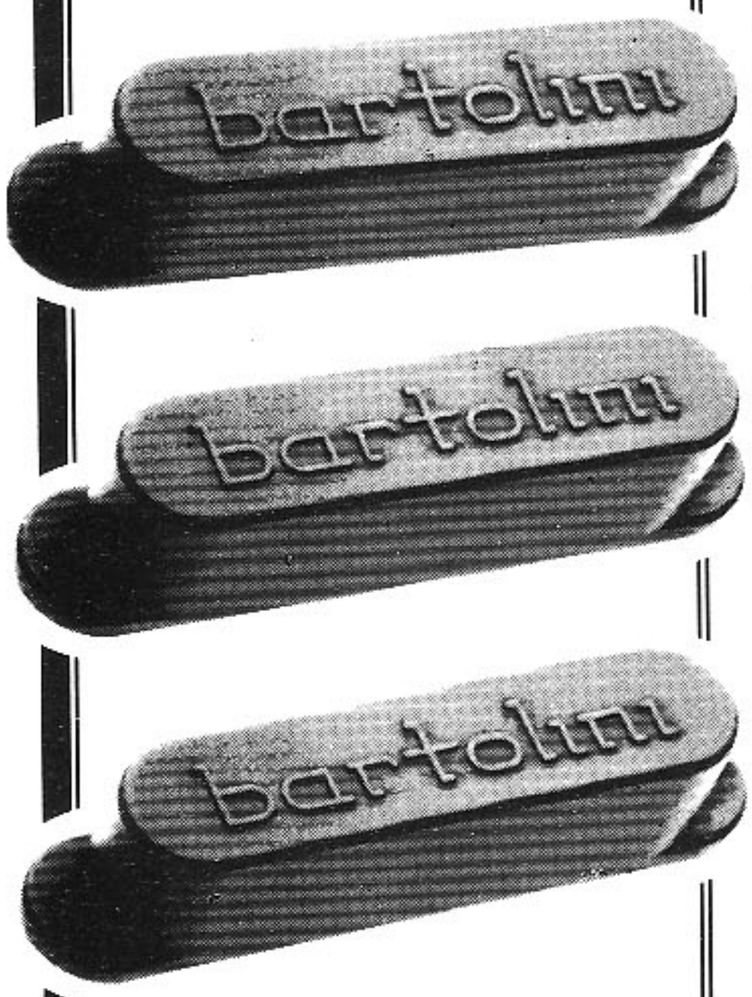
With the prevailing "shut up and play your guitar" attitude of the last few years, single-function stomp boxes have become the player's tone tool of choice. Cheap, easy to operate, battery-powered and portable, stomp boxes provide tonal versatility without requiring a stack of manuals, racks and MIDI pedals to get them to work. Want to change the chain order? Simply unplug the cables, shuffle the pedals around and connect them back together. Tired of the "Berserk-O-Tone"? Chuck it and plug in the "Turbo Barf Fuzz."

Stomp boxes seem to be the answer to all the world's ills, but even these goodies have their pitfalls. Pedals can get noisy if you use more than a couple. If you want to engage several effects at once, such as going from a clean rhythm sound to a distorted chorus tone with a hint of delay, you'll look like Sammy Davis Jr. dancin' the ol' soft shoe. And then you have to contend with wall warts (those pesky power adapters that cover more than one outlet), dead batteries, cheap switches that always seem to break during your big solo and other annoyances.

So what's a player to do? It all comes down to the old personal preference/pocketbook ratio. If you like to use a lot of different effects, enjoy poring over thick manuals and are willing to forgive a few sonic shortcomings, then a multi-effects unit is for you. If you're a tone purist and are loaded with extra money, get a rack full of single-function processors, a switching system, a roadie and a van. If your tastes are more proletarian, and you want to mix and match brands, tones and effect order, then a bag o' stomps is your ticket. It's enough to make you want to plug directly into your amp, dontcha think?

Ritchie Fliegler is the author of The Complete Guide to Guitar and Amp Maintenance *(Hal Leonard). Send your questions to: Box 18247, Fountain Hills, AZ 85269.*

beyond the limits...



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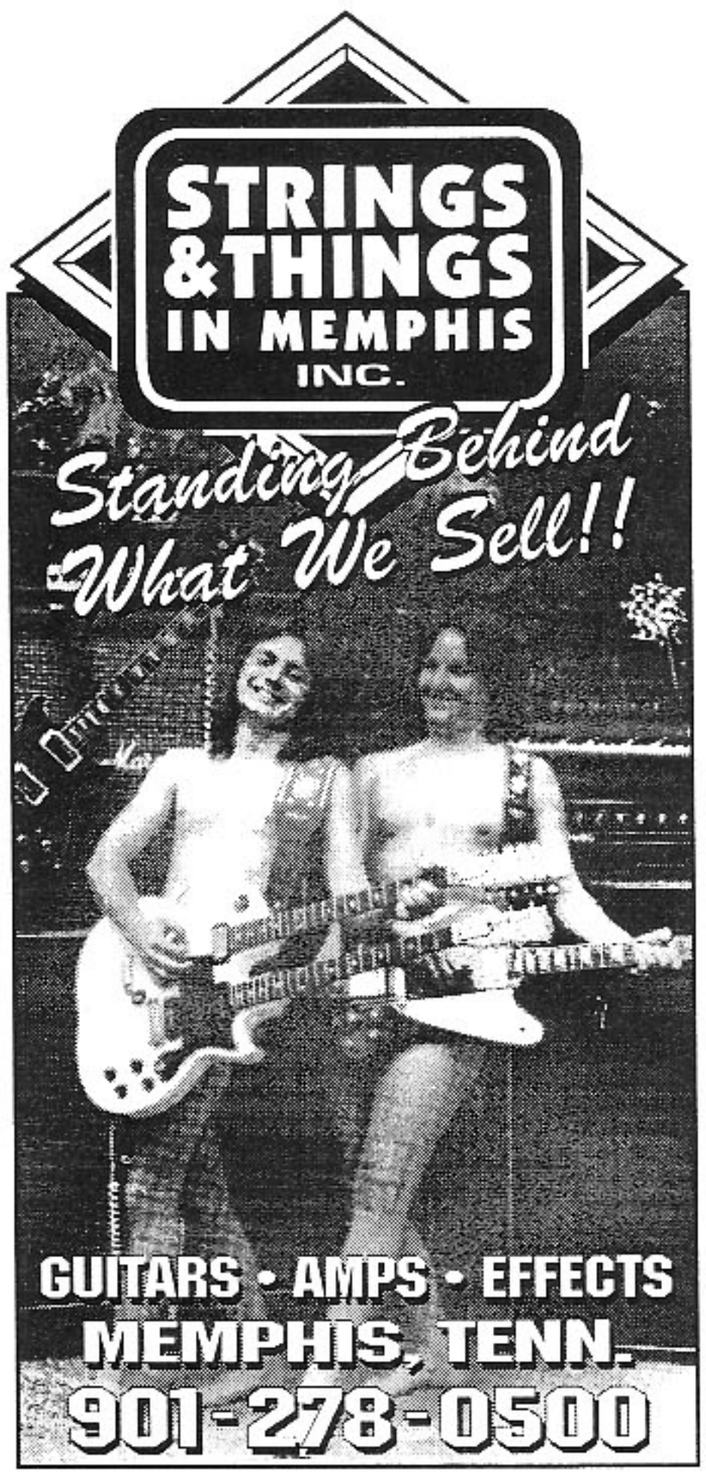

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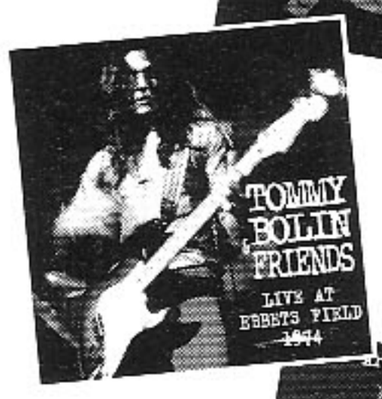

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TOMMY BOLIN ARCHIVES, INC

Continued from page 42

but double-LP length, because if you combined two of our records, you'd still only get an hour's worth of music.

DIRNT: People ask us, "How come your songs are so short?" But it's not that our songs are short, it's that everyone else's songs are so slow. If you slow our album down to the pace of everyone else's, it'll be twice as long as everyone else's.

GW: You guys were a breath of fresh air after grunge. You helped bring tight, concise songs back to rock.

ARMSTRONG: Well, we write rock and roll music. We're a rock and roll band. We're extroverted and exhibitionist. We're not shoe gazers—no way. We're demented. Up on stage, I'm gonna take my fuckin' clothes off and wiggle my little dick at everybody. I'm gonna be totally obnoxious and rude and spit in the eye of every fucking heavy grunge band that ever came out. Not that we set out to become the "next big thing after grunge."

DIRNT: It's nice that people actually picked out the difference between us and some of the grunge stuff. I really like Nirvana, but there is a difference between them and us. It's weird that people were able to pick out the difference. I thought a lot of people would just throw us in the same class.

GW: Grunge has that Seventies metal vibe that isn't a part of your music.

DIRNT: Yeah. Sabbath or something. Deep Purple-type shit.

ARMSTRONG: Well, "Brain Stew"'s kinda metal.

GW: Do you think that's why radio picked up on it? It almost has that "Kashmir" beat.

ARMSTRONG: *[not really amused]* Heh, heh, heh.

GW: Almost. *Almost.*

ARMSTRONG: Hey, watch it, buddy. Who's Kashmir? No, actually I'm a metaller, in a lot of ways. I think Metallica's *Master of Puppets* is one of the best metal records of all time. And I really like the sound quality of Pantera's last record. The drums and guitars are enormous. That might seem an unlikely thing for me to say, but I like Pantera.

DIRNT: I had a bad reaction to metal when I was younger. All of a sudden I hated it, couldn't stand it anymore. That's why, for all the good there is in Soundgarden, it's always been hard for me to like them. Their songwriting's getting better, but I still don't care for a lot of the high vocals. And Alice in Chains—their music's okay, but you see them live and it's like, "God, these guys are fucking *metal*." The bass player is a fucking hair machine. I've met these guys and they're like, black

boots/leather jacket types. I dunno, man. They're nice guys, but you just can't take 'em seriously.

ARMSTRONG: Nice guys finish last.

DIRNT: When I saw them live, they were so separated from the crowd. I think their lead singer has a real problem with that. Whatever his name is.

GW: Layne Staley.

DIRNT: Yeah. Lame.

ARMSTRONG: When *Nevermind* came out, everybody was going for that "Butch Vig Big Muff" sound. We just couldn't do that. Instead of sounding bigger, it would be self-defeating. So much saturation with such fast-paced music would sound like shit. But I really think Guns N' Roses' *Appetite for Destruction [Geffen, 1986]* has a really good sound. I like that record a lot. I'm not ashamed to say it, either. I like a lot of the Cure's guitar playing, too. Robert Smith writes great songs and gets really great guitar sounds. I also like Elvis Costello, and some of the guitar sounds he gets. Are you a Bush fan?

GW: No.

ARMSTRONG: Good. I think those are some of the crappiest guitar sounds I've ever heard in my life. That song "Glycerine" has to have the shittiest guitar sound ever.

DIRNT: I don't like some of the vocal effects they use, either.

ARMSTRONG: I've talked a lot of shit about Smashing Pumpkins, but I think the guitar sound on "1979" is really good, and so is the song itself.

DIRNT: I think us talking shit about Smashing Pumpkins is more just making fun of how pathetic those guys are. Especially Billy Corgan. I had a two-hour discussion with him one time. And at the end, I just wanted to put his head on my shoulder so he could cry. Like, "Billy, Billy, man, it's gonna be all right."

ARMSTRONG: No one knows it, but he happens to be a really good basketball player. He can slam dunk.

DIRNT: I like it when guitarists are really good but don't make a big deal of it. I think it would have been better if Billy Corgan hadn't made such a fucking big issue of his guitar playing right after they put out their first album, like, *"I* played most of the guitar on this album. Any hot licks you hear, that's me, not James."

ARMSTRONG: I think they had a couple of good songs on *Mellon Collie and the Infinite Sadness [Virgin, 1995]*, although I have to admit that I've never listened to it all the way through. "1979" is probably one of the best songs of the year.

DIRNT: I couldn't listen to that album all the way through.

ARMSTRONG: That much Big Muff would drive me nuts. The Big Muff is one of the most overrated pieces of equipment ever.

DIRNT: So many bands thought, "If we just put this on the record, oh God, the world will come to us."

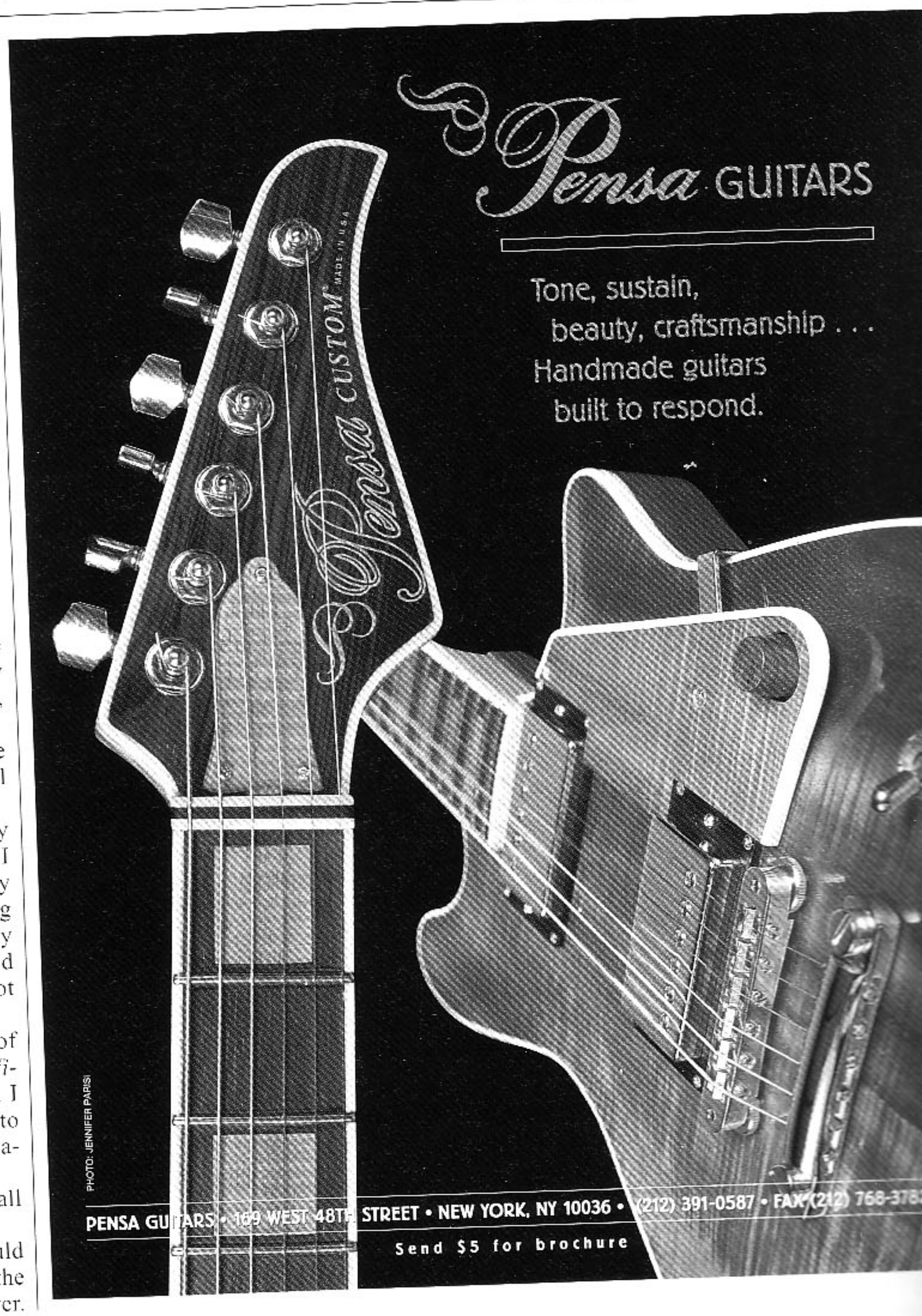
GW: What's it like to have to live up to someone else's definition of punk? Or being told that you've betrayed that ideal?

ARMSTRONG: I can't think of anything *less* punk than establishing a set of rules. I don't set any rules for myself. I don't live up to anybody's expectations. I'm totally self-sufficient. That's what punk is about to me, not some elitist attitude. I'm not an elitist at all. I have different kinds of friends. I'm into strange people and different lifestyles. Even if someone is a Republican, I could still sit down and have a discussion with him and talk about life. I think the elitist, *maximumrockandroll* punks are a lot more conservative than Republicans.

DIRNT: They're afraid of change.

GW: So how far along are you on your new album?

ARMSTRONG: We've got maybe a total of 22 or 23 songs right now. We just want to keep writing, have a huge, broad scope of material written, and then figure out what we're gonna do with it all. We want to challenge ourselves, but we want the new album to be a natural progression. We want to stick with who we are.●



THE CLASH

Continued from page 71

politicized punk and reggae-style rockers, tracks like "London Calling" and "The Guns of Brixton" would have assured the album its place in history. But the Clash didn't stop there. Acting on the belief that punk, as Joe Strummer said, wasn't "about rules," the group flirted with roots rock, jazz and Caribbean music, and fleshed out its guitar/bass/drums lineup with keyboards (by Mickey Gallagher, on loan from Ian Dury's Blockheads), horns, marimba and anything else that happened to suit a particular song or mood. Even better, the songs managed to be as tuneful as they were topical, framing lyrics about Basque terrorists ("Spanish Bombs") or how capitalism corrupts idealism ("Death or Glory") with memorable melodies.

London Calling also gave the band its first hit, though the song was added almost by accident. "Train In Vain" had been recorded virtually overnight for a proposed flexi-disc that Britain's *New Musical Express* magazine planned to put out. But when the paper changed its mind, the song was added to the album. "We couldn't mention it on the cover or on the labels as they'd already been printed," explained Clash associate Kosmo Vinyl.

From there, the band's ambition seemed unstoppable. Not only was *Sandinista!* a full disc longer than the double-LP *London Calling*, it found the Clash going even further afield in its songwriting approach. From the Irish folk of "Lose This Skin" to the mariachi thrum of "Washington Bullets" to a kiddie-karaoke remake of "Career Opportunities," it was as if the group was trying to cram an entire world of music onto a triple album. It also found the band experimenting in the studio, trying everything from tape manipulation ("Mensforth Hill") to rhythm loops. Bassist Norman Watt-Roy, who filled in for Simonon on some tracks, recalled that for "The Magnificent Seven" Strummer asked for something funky to rap over. "So we started that riff and we looped that and Joe wrote the words there and then. [It was] totally spontaneous."

Unfortunately, the consensus was that the Clash had bitten off more than it could chew with *Sandinista!* Moreover, the album's pointed politics led to accusations (particularly in Britain) of an anti-American bias within the band—though, ironically enough, more than half the album's worldwide sales were in the U.S.

Bad reviews were the least of it. In 1981, a planned series of shows at Bond's Casino in New York were canceled and then rescheduled, and the band's attempts to broaden its audience were upended when the throng booed opening act Grandmaster Flash & the Furious Five; later that year, Headon was arrested for heroin possession. Then, in '82, as *Combat Rock* was being prepared for release, Strummer went AWOL. When he returned, Headon was sacked, and Chimes was brought back until a new drummer could be found. Things were seriously awry in the Clash camp.

Yet *Combat Rock* ended up the band's biggest hit album of all. Offering more funk than punk, it put "Should I Stay or Should I Go" in the Top 50, while "Rock the Casbah" climbed to Number Eight. After an arena tour with the Who, the band headlined at the US Festival; for a moment, it looked as if the Clash would actually conquer America.

In the end, however, the band was overcome by its own internal problems. In 1983, Strummer and Simonon fired Jones as drug rumors swirled, and though the new line-up released *Cut the Crap*, complete with a would-be anthem boasting "We Are the Clash," it was clear they weren't. By November of 1985, the Clash had called it quits. Punk rock would never be the same. ●

CLASH DISCOGRAPHY

Continued from page 77

scaled such dizzying heights in the past. And, unfortunately, the band's excursions into funk and rap here offer conclusive proof that its enthusiasm for both genres definitely exceeded its ability to successfully execute either.

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CUT THE CRAP
(Epic, 1985)
★

The title must have been suggested to Strummer by a fan who heard the tapes. A Clash album in name only, this swan song featured Strummer, bassist Paul Simonon and two rent-a-punks vainly attempting to recapture past glories. A bad way to go out.

THE STORY OF THE CLASH, VOLUME ONE
(Epic, 1988)
★★1/2

As a best-of, this double disc falls short of the mark, erring on the side of safety by omitting many of the Clash's truly great moments in favor of the band's few hits and a seemingly random selection of its many misses. Very funny liner notes, though.

CLASH ON BROADWAY
(Epic, 1991)
★★★★1/2

This three-CD retrospective thankfully tells the story the way it should be, chronologically and with regard for the band's importance as architects of punk. Including most of the high points, a handful of rarities and a thoughtfully compiled booklet (with an essay by the late, legendary critic and Clash lover Lester Bangs), this is a fitting testament to a seminal band. ●

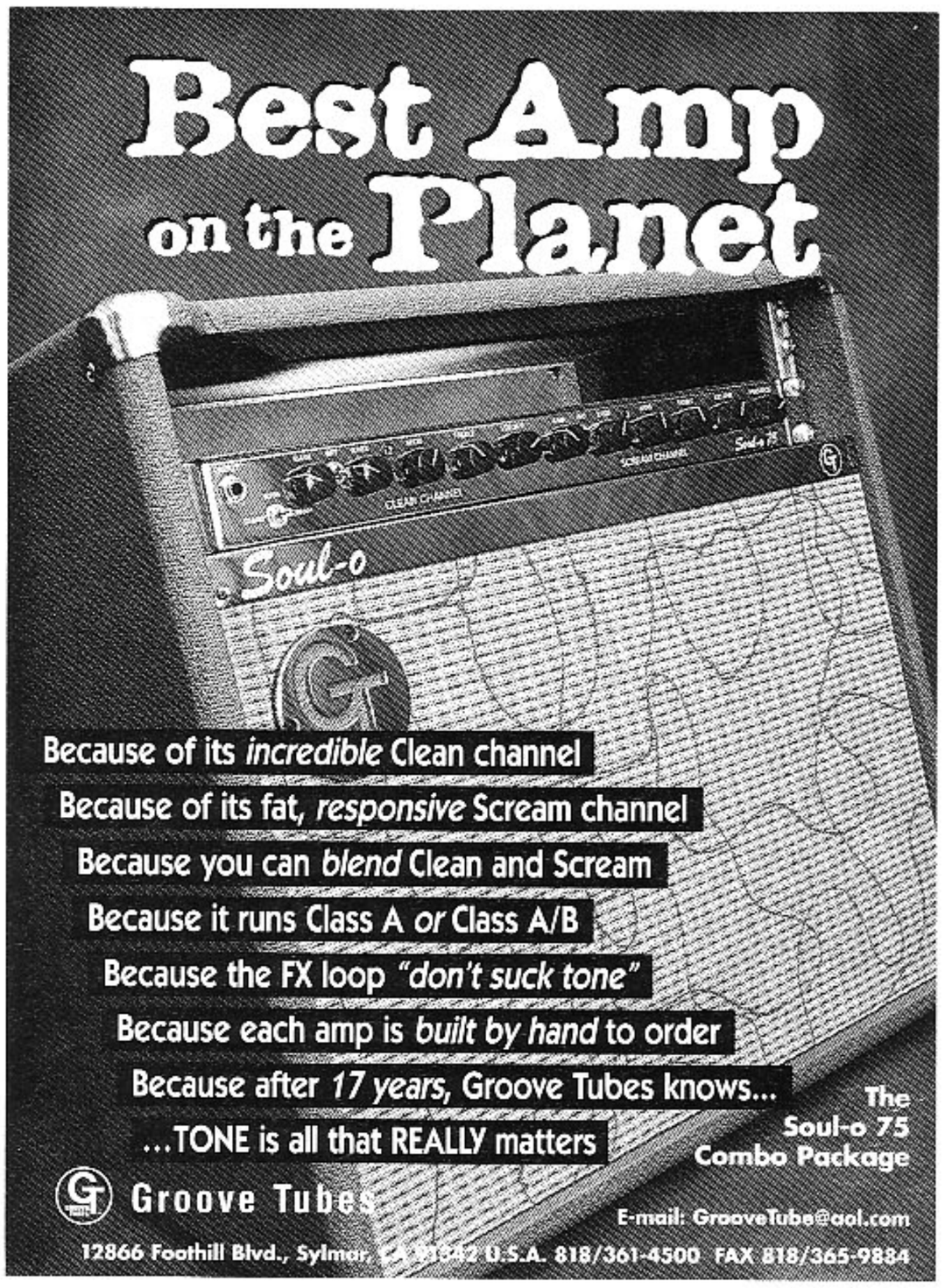
DEATH OR GLORY—THE CLASH
Continued from page 87

Way back in some city heat
When a friend was anybody with food to eat
It was a lousy life with a leaking roof
We got up to find that truth
Make a drum from a garbage can
Allow your tongue to be a man
When the heat propels you off your seat
You got it made in the cold concrete
"Movers and Shakers"—*The Clash*

THIS IS WHERE I left the Clash. I didn't resent that they had become something different; far from it. I continued to enjoy 45's like "The Call Up," "Know Your Rights" and "London Calling," and got bored with *Sandinista!* like everybody else. *Combat Rock* seemed like a definite return to form, but when the group split in late 1986, it was like, "Oh, I thought it had happened already." The Clash had suffered the fate of everyone with stamina: they had become just another rock group, playing faraway stadia. Punk was long gone, and my interests were now focused on the androgynous provocations of Soft Cell, the sheer playfulness of early Electro and hip hop records by Afrika Bambaataa and Grandmaster Flash. The Clash were just *there,* and then, one day, they weren't.

It's here that their story turns a weird corner. Recruiting two new guitarists, Nick Sheppard and Vince White, the Clash regrouped for a May 1985 "busking tour," which found the group playing unannounced outside various rock venues and in public places all over the U.K. By this time, their support had been reduced to almost nothing. This was unfortunate, because in the autumn, the group released its greatest single, "This Is England." Featuring an impassioned, mature Strummer vocal, this song stands as the last great gasp of the Seventies punk rock insurgence—an explicit record of the promises punk had made and exactly how they had been reneged upon. I was obsessed with it, and with the album the song appears on, *Cut the Crap*, which was an exciting restatement of the group's outsider attitude. I must have been the only one to think so because, faced with unanimously terrible reviews, the Clash quietly called it a day for the second time.

In the 10 or so years since, the band's stock has slowly risen. A major CD reissue campaign was spearheaded by the 1988 compilation *The Story of the Clash Vol. 1* (Strummer's title deliberately teasing out



the possibility of a more united activity) and followed by the 1991 *Clash on Broadway* box set. More importantly, their musical influence has been felt in myriad ways: the agit-punk funk of Rage Against the Machine; the stoner beats of post-Manchester indie groups; the all-out attack of Rancid, even the continued sampling expertise of the dance market. In 1991, Beats International went to Number One in the U.K. with "Dub Be Good to Me," an aural collage of Kool & the Gang and Paul Simonon's bassline for "Guns of Brixton." They have entered the data bank common to musicians of all persuasions.

The Clash are an important part of pop history. I still live five minutes or so from their North Kensington patch, and they're still part of my mental map of London, even though the spaces that they moved between have now all been filled in. Some aspects of the group have become dated, but their stubborn insistence on doing things their own way, on continually changing in reaction to their physical and emotional environment, remains a beacon to every rock and dance act trying to "find that truth." This spirit—which has been nullified not at all by their individual careers—begs the question of a reunion: if, like their peers and rivals the Sex Pistols, they were to get back together, they would still be relevant, if only to complete the circle on a project that never fully lived up to its potential. Sometimes you don't know what you have until it's gone. ●

METALLICA
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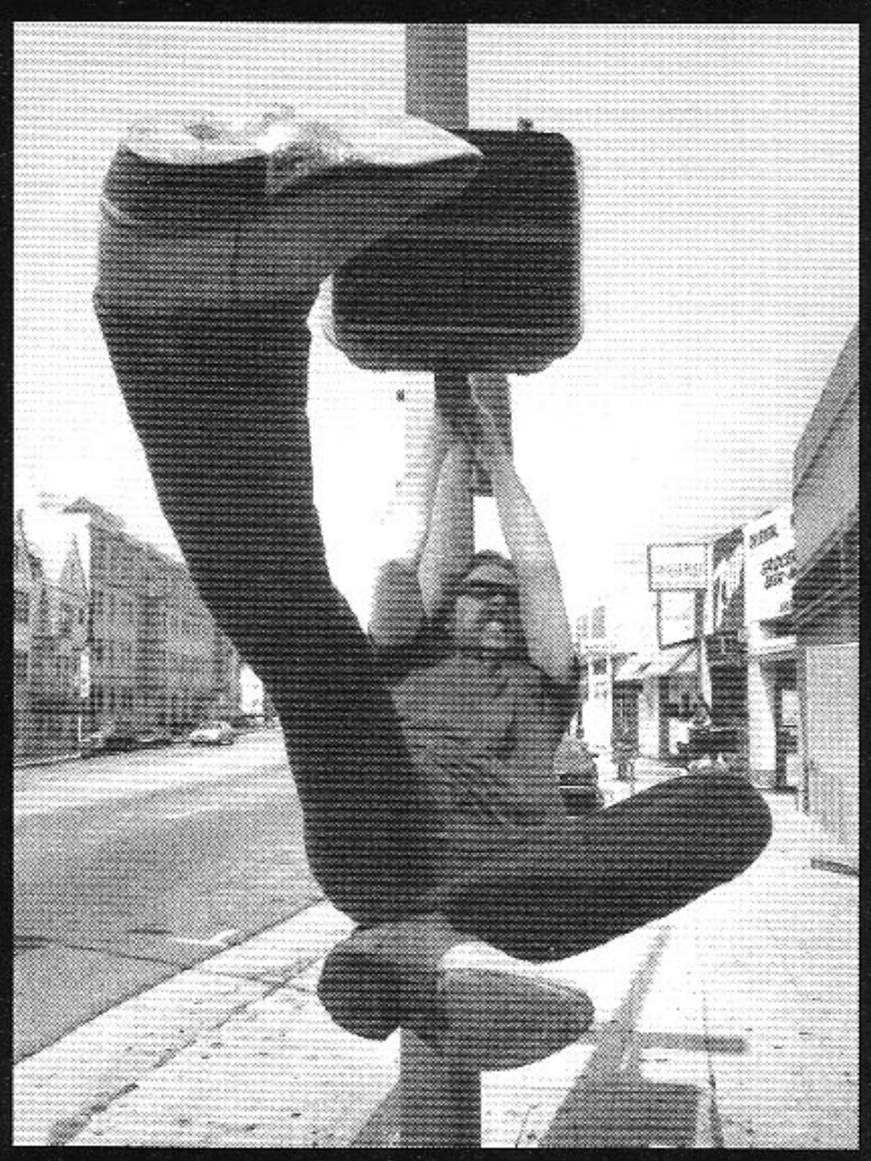

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ANGUS YOUNG

Continued from Page 198
used to tell me that if I fell all over the stage chasing my guitar, I should make it look like part of the act!"

"HAVE YOU EVER LOVED A WOMAN"
Derek & the Dominoes
Layla and Other Assorted Love Songs
(Polydor, 1970)

"I know Van Halen is probably a genius, but he sounds like he *practices*. It's not just him and Steve Vai, either; a lot of those guys sound like they're practicing scales. And that's fine, but to me it becomes cold and plastic—you know it's been rehearsed. Whereas when you listen to Eric Clapton, you feel that every note comes from the heart."

"BASIN ST. BLUES" "ST. JAMES INFIRMARY"
Louis Armstrong
***Young Louis Armstrong (1930-33)* (RCA)**

"My sister took me to see him when I was a kid, and I still think he was one of the greatest musicians of all time. Especially when you listen to his old records, like these, and hear the incredible musicianship and emotion coming out of his horn. And the technology in those days was almost non-existent—all the tracks had to be done in one take. I can picture him in that big football stadium where I saw him: he wasn't a big man, but when he played, he seemed bigger than the stadium itself!" ●

RECORD REVIEWS

Continued from page 105

Frank often just liked to boogie, as he most dramatically does on the scathing live versions of "Johnny B. Goode" and "Who Do Ya Love," where he plays some of the fastest and most intense blues licks ever heard by man. Long may Marino wail.

—MORDECHAI KLEIDERMACHER

★ ★ ★ 1/2
YOU AND WHAT ARMY
Kinda Wanna
BIG DEAL

IMAGINE THE VIOLENT FEMMES, Joe Jackson and Crash Test Dummies in the same room and you might fathom the sonic world occupied by You and What Army. Although

folk-rock bands seem to be popping up all over the place, YAWA have found a new way to inject folk instrumentation into a rock band format, proving that you don't have to be a Green Day knock-off or jangly Byrds-wannabe to write viable pop songs in the Nineties. *Kinda Wanna* showcases the band's uncanny knack for combining upbeat tunes and crystalline electric guitar tones with violin and accordion without sounding the least bit wimpy. Held together by Gary Meister's melodic vocals, slower tracks such as "American Car Crash Little Girl" and the title track hold up just as well as the rockers. This is tough folk for rude people.

—JEFF COLCHAMIRO

PETE TOWNSHEND

Continued from page 98

Lifehouse would make an interesting challenge for that medium. But what I'm actually doing with *Lifehouse* at the moment is much what I'm doing with *Quadrophenia*. I'm just trying to develop them as dramatic musical works for live performance. I'm more interested in that. The thing about CD-ROM, movies, TV, CDs, the Internet and all those media is that we can disguise ourselves far too well in them. All these electronic pathways between people create the potential for an incredible degree of intimacy.

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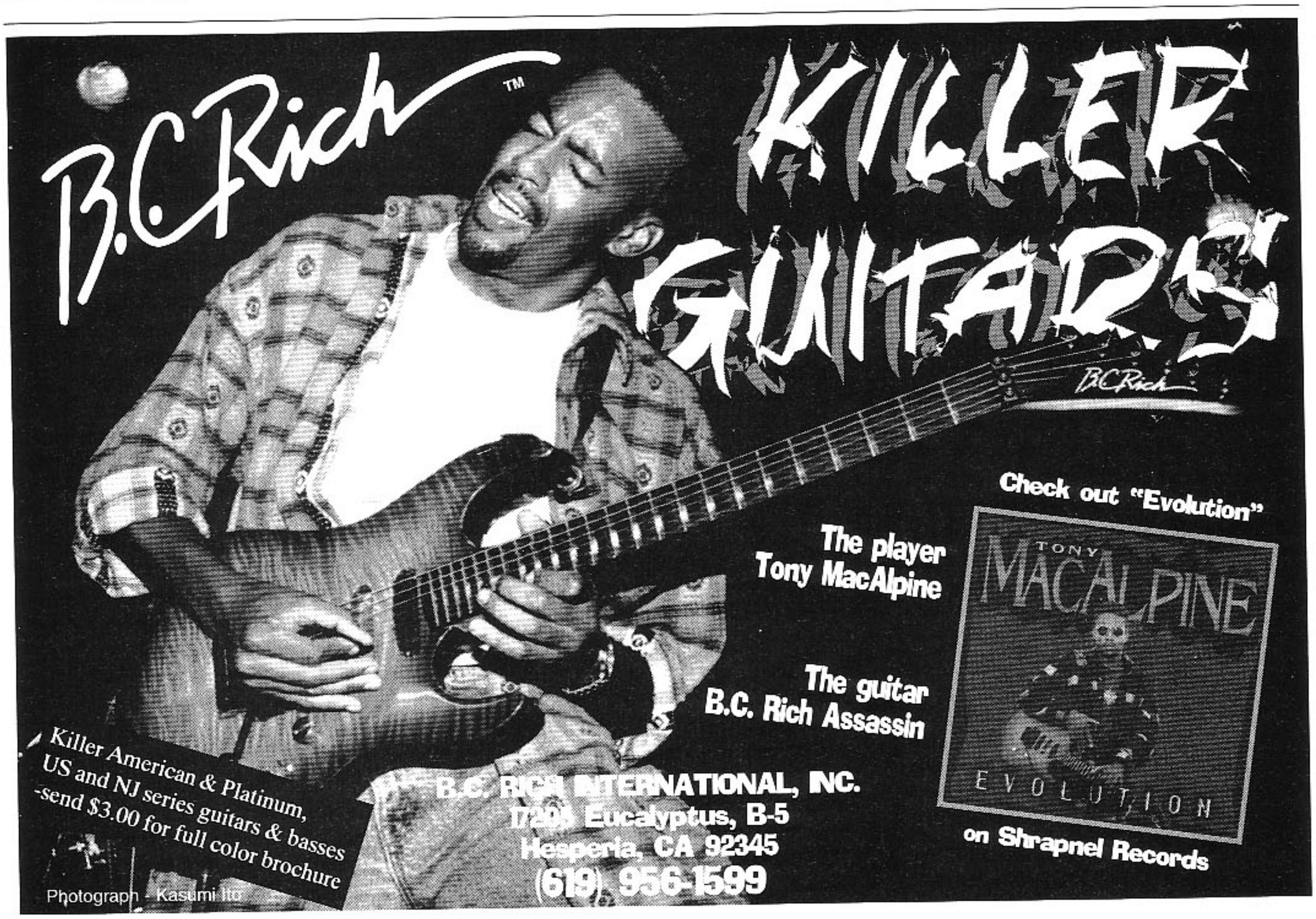

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PETE TOWNSHEND

Unfortunately, we can also hide in that area. For example, we don't really know who Sharon Stone is. I don't know if many of us care. But if we want to know, there's no way of finding out. Our "access" is very selectively controlled and manipulated.

You can't really do that with live performance. You might try to. You might say [*in an assertive voice*], "I'll tell you exactly what this is going to be about." But when you're in front of a group of people and some guy's yelling out, "Play fookin' 'Magic Bus'," and some beautiful girl down front is showing you her body and mouthing the words, "I love you, I love you; you can have me," it just breaks up the whole process. And you think, "Oh, my God, this isn't what I intended. Everything's out of control!" But *that's* good. And so I'm drawn back to live performance all the time. On this trip, I'm playing small concerts. I said often—I don't know if I really honestly meant it, but I *said* —that one of the things I liked about working on *Tommy* was being in theaters that only hold 1500 people. Big rock and roll shows are strange. And what's strange for me is that my first opportunity to develop *Quadrophenia* in front of the public is going to be in front of 150,000 people—possibly more—in Hyde Park. But I think the most important thing is that it'll be 150,000 *real* people. ●

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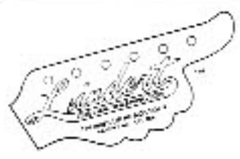

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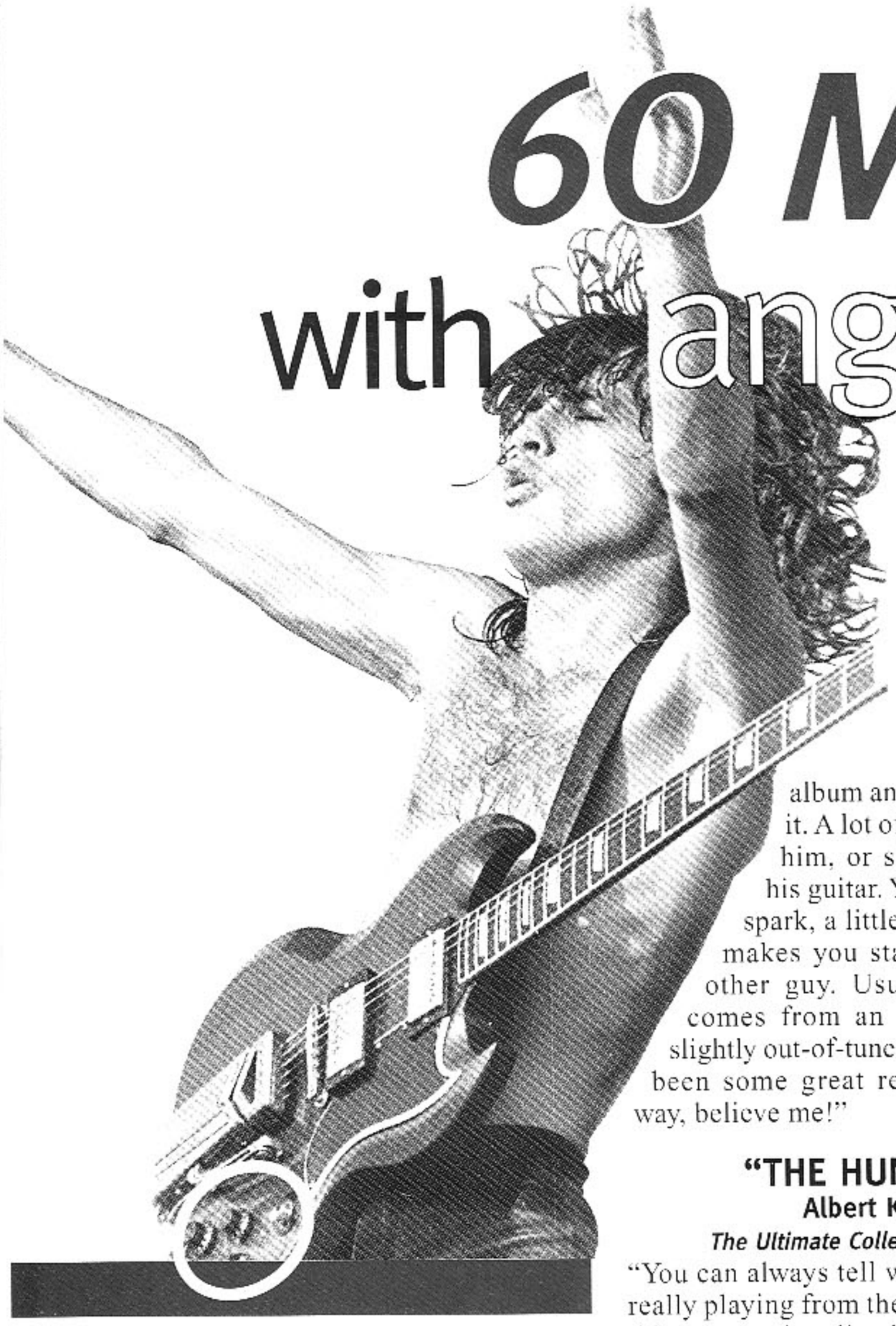

Angus Young hammers together his ultimate 60-minute mix tape.

IN HIS 20-PLUS years with AC/DC, Angus Young hasn't played a single dishonest note. Young's excellence notwithstanding, some have accused his band of making the same album over and over—12 times, to be exact.

"That's a dirty lie!" Angus blurts. "The truth is that we've made the same album over and over *14* times!"

The ineffable Angus is the subject of this month's "60 Minutes," in which we pose the time-honored question: "If you were sent to a desert island and could only take one cassette's worth of music with you, what songs would you choose?" Not surprisingly, Young went right to the blues and early rock classics that so heavily influenced his own raucous style. Naturally, the diminutive god of blues-rock also threw a few curve balls into the mix.

"SCHOOL DAYS"

Chuck Berry

***Golden Hits* (Mercury)**

"We used to cover this one in the early days. I can still play a whole Chuck Berry album and get a kick out of it. A lot of people underrate him, or say he won't tune his guitar. You have to have a spark, a little bit of magic that makes you stand out from the other guy. Usually, that magic comes from an accident—like a slightly out-of-tune guitar. There have been some great records made that way, believe me!"

"THE HUNTER"

Albert King

***The Ultimate Collection* (Rhino)**

"You can always tell when somebody is really playing from the gut. You listen to this song and realize it's barely a three-note solo, but it has that magic. I've tried to do that myself, where you just sit there on one note and make it *breathe*."

"MANNISH BOY"

Muddy Waters and Johnny Winter

***Hard Again* (Blue Sky, 1977)**

"Anybody can play a basic blues tune—the secret to making it come alive is the intensity and feeling you put into it. A certain looseness helps, too; you can't be a perfectionist over every little thing or you'll kill the spirit. These guys had that rough, raw edge that kept it sounding fresh."

"COME TOGETHER"

The Beatles

***Abbey Road* (Capitol, 1969)**

"Even a great band like the Beatles goes off on a detour and does a bit of cabaret for a while. But you find that the truly great ones always come back to playing *real* rock and roll. I thought this whole album got a bit glossed over at the time of its release."

"SAILIN' SHOES"

Little Feat

***Sailin' Shoes* (Warner Bros., 1972)**

"They were a band with a great rhythmic sense—you've got to have that swing. A lot of metal bands miss that and sound like German oom-pah music sped up. Lowell [*George*] had a great sense of humor, including the ability to poke fun at himself. Maintaining your sense of humor is so important—that ability to laugh at yourself as well as the world around you keeps your energy flowing."

"HONKY TONK WOMEN"

The Rolling Stones

***Hot Rocks 1964-71* (Abkco)**

"Just listen to that opening chord in 'Honky Tonk Women.' I've always admired someone like Keith Richards who, instead of playing six notes or chords, plays just one and gets the same feeling across. Often, by simplifying you focus in on something and make it even better, more direct. I used to thrash away at 'Jumpin' Jack Flash' as a kid and then ask my brother Malcolm, 'What chord is that?' And he'd go, 'That's an E and that's a B—you play them all the bloody time!' I wanted to be flash, so I started soloing before I learned the basic chords. When all my mates were learning [*The Animals*] 'House of the Rising Sun,' I was going for 'Purple Haze.'"

"WON'T GET FOOLED AGAIN"

The Who

***Who's Next* (MCA, 1971)**

"Pete Townshend is another guy who can sit on one string or chord and make some seemingly mundane thing really come alive. He used to play a very light Gibson SG, like I do. But when he'd whack the SG it would really move, and he'd stand there like a rock. Being a little guy, when I hit the SG it moves—but I have no choice but to move with it. [*laughs*] My brother George

Continued on page 188

Chris Walter/Retna